- **SATURDAY SPECIAL /A3-1**

Pinoys can now see why Ellen Degeneres' edgy talk show a hit

- **WORLD / A8**

Israel's Sharon still in deep coma after 7-hour operation

- **BUSINESS / B1**

Banco de Oro merger with EPCIB seen creating RP 2nd biggest bank

- **METRO /A15**

Girl who found, returned P300,000 gets cash, gifts, scholarships

Number of hungry Pinoys hits new high, says survey

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

WHILE PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARroyo exults that the Philippines is on the verge of economic takeoff, the number of Filipinos who said they have gone hungry has risen to a record high with nearly 17 percent of people surveyed saying they had

NUMBER/ A4

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'Windows' rises from 9/11 ashes with Pinoy lumpia

NEW YORK—THE FILipino lumpia is on the menu of a new restaurant put up by former workers of the opulent Windows on the World restaurant which once graced the 107th floor of

WINDOWS/ A4

SARAP N'YAN, SIYEMPRE!

GMA to revamp Cabinet

Changes to include Palace chief of staff, DILG, DSWD

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Norman Bordadora

MALACAÑANG IS EXPECTED to announce new appointments to major and minor posts in the Cabinet today or tomorrow.

Two Palace officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the appointees would include Environment Secretary Michael Defensor as President Macapagal-Arroyo's chief of staff; Dr. Esperanza Cabral as social welfare secretary, and Philippine Information Agency Director General Rene Velasco as head of the Presidential Management Staff (PMS).

The sources said the biggest Cabinet change would affect the Department of Interior and Local Government.

The incumbent interior secretary, Angelo Reyes, has supposedly continued to resist the President's offer of the ambassadorship to the United States.

Ms Arroyo supposedly wants to use the DILG post to reward Antipolo Rep. Ronaldo Puno, whose previous stint as interior secretary was cut short by the abrupt end of the Estrada administration.

In a radio interview, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita declined to name names.

"Let's just wait for the President's announcements. She'll probably make them before the end of this week," he said.

Ermita was hesitant to call the Cabinet makeover a "major" undertaking, saying it would affect only a few Cabinet posts, most Cabinet-level posts in the Office of the President, and minor posts in government agencies.

But he said the changes had been set, and that he was just waiting for Ms Arroyo's go-signal.

Defensor, the President's spokesperson during the 2004 election campaign

GMA TO REVAMP/ A6

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TALK OF THE TOWN: Here's the photo to prove the Jan. 2 meeting of (from right) former President Fidel Ramos, Senate President Franklin Drilon and former Sen. Vicente "Tito" Sotto really took place in FVR'S office at the Urban Bank building in Makati City. Ramos sent Sotto this photo framed by the rah-rah objectives of his peace and development foundation. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

FVR told: Speak for yourself on position

By TJ Burgonio and Cynthia D. Balana

FORMER PRESIDENT FIDEL V. RAMOS, A man known to keep his cards close to his chest, was urged yesterday to state if he still supported President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon challenged Ramos to publicly declare if he was still behind Ms Arroyo.

"Let us know how far FVR is going to explain his latest round of enigmatic talk. We need to hear [it] from the horse's mouth," Biazon told the INQUIRER. "If he professes support for GMA, that should be taken with a grain of salt."

Malacañang claimed Wednesday Ms Arroyo still had Ramos' "unequivocal support."

Ramos was also urged to break his silence on what was talked about between

FVR TOLD/ A6

GMA to invite Cory, Erap to state council meet Jan. 24

By Philip C. Tubeza and Christine O. Avendaño

THE POLITICAL TEMPERATURE MAY BE heating up again but President Macapagal-Arroyo has no qualms about meeting face to face with two former Presidents who have publicly called on her to resign.

Pro-administration and veteran lawmaker Cebu Rep. Antonio Cuenco told the INQUIRER yesterday he had just spoken with Ms Arroyo and that Malacañang would invite former Presidents Corazon Aquino and Joseph Estrada to the Jan. 24 Council of State meeting.

The scheduled gathering of the country's top political and economic leaders would be held just five days after the 5th anniversary of the Jan. 20, 2001, Edsa II "people power" revolt that ousted Estrada from the presidency.

Cuenco said Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita would send out the formal invitations to Aquino and Estrada.

"I just spoke with the President and she finds nothing wrong with my proposal. She does not have any objection for all former Presidents, including Erap, to attend the meeting," Cuenco said.

The council is composed of former Presidents, congressional and Senate leaders, Cabinet members, top businessmen and local government executives.

It would, in fact, be a four-sided face-off.

Former President Fidel V. Ramos, who has expressed strong displeasure at the proposal of the Arroyo-handpicked Consultative Commission to cancel the 2007 mid-term elections,

GMA TO INVITE/ A6

Faeldon now officially a fugitive; bail cancelled

By Tarra V. Quismundo and Leila B. Salaverria

THREE WEEKS AFTER ESCAPING HIS guards, one of the junior military officers who led the Oakwood mutiny of 2003 has officially become a fugitive from the law.

During a hearing yesterday morning, Judge Oscar Pimentel of Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 148 ordered the issuance of an arrest warrant for Marine Capt. Nicanor Faeldon.

Pimentel issued the order in response to a motion of the Department of Justice filed on Wednesday seeking Faeldon's arrest and the cancellation of the P100,000 bail bond he posted on July 19, 2004.

The motion was signed by Assistant Chief State Prosecutor Richard Anthony Fadullon and State Prosecutor Juan Pedro Navera.

"A fugitive loses his right to provisional liberty," the prosecutors said in explaining why the DOJ was seeking an arrest warrant.

Pimentel also ordered stricter security measures for Faeldon's co-accused in his coup d'etat case and directed the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the

FAELDON/ A6

DEVOTEES OF THE BLACK Nazarene enshrined in the Quiapo Church attend Mass and penitential rites on the first Friday of the year. The massive throng is expected to swell to overwhelming numbers on Monday, Jan. 9, the Nazarene's feast, when the predominantly male attendees fight for the chance to touch the 200-year-old statue of Jesus carrying His Cross, or even just the rope enclosing the makeshift stage where the holy image is enthroned. REM ZAMORA

Makati's the place to be, if you're a bird

By Tarra V. Quismundo

PLANNING TO SHOOT WILD birds with that new air rifle you got for Christmas? If you're in Makati—don't.

Beginning this year, people in the country's financial capital are only allowed to bird watch or, at most, shoot pictures of birds. A city ordinance has declared Makati City a bird sanctuary—a protected area for birds to nest and procreate in.

"We thought we should declare the whole city a bird sanctuary, so that we could undertake more greening projects and set aside areas for planting to encourage the reproduction, nesting and visits of more birds," said Gerlie Santos, a consultant of the city's Department of Environmental Services (DES).

The local legislation, passed by the city council late last year, was based on a DES proposal. Implemented at the start of the new year, the legislation, Santos said, imposed fines and penalties on those caught harming or trading in wild birds, making such activities a crime in Makati.

"The entire Makati City is hereby declared a bird sanctuary to serve as refuge and haven for birds regardless of class or species," the first sec-

MAKATI'S/ A4

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. Northern and Eastern Luzon and Eastern Visayas will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with light rains.

COMPILED BY JAMIE ALARCON, PDI RESEARCH/01/07/06 SOURCE PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Second FrontPage

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5 cops killed in Masbate ambush

By Bobby Q. Labalan
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

SORSOGON CITY – FIVE POLICEMEN AND three civilians were killed in an ambush staged by suspected members of the communist New People's Army in Claveria, Masbate, yesterday.

SPO4 Elena Añonuevo, chief of the women's desk of the Claveria police, identified the fatalities as PO3 Benjie Tenoso, PO3 Cirilo Fuentes, PO1 Rommel Tunglod, PO1 Christian Cabug, PO1 Noriel Gracilla and civilians Ar-jay Cadag and brothers Boboy and Ricky Salamuding.

Añonuevo said the ambush occurred at around 10:30 a.m. as a 10-man joint team from the Claveria Municipal Police Office and the military's 5th Regional Mobile Group was on its way to sitio San Jose in a civilian truck to check on the reported presence of armed men there.

The police report said that upon reaching San Jose, which is about 1.5 km from the Claveria town proper, the truck hit two land mines causing the death of the victims, including the civilians.

About 50 suspected NPA members who had positioned themselves alongside the road then opened fire on the government forces.

Wounded in the attack were PO1 Ernie Concepcion, PO1 Rolando Laurio, truck driver Glen Garcia and helper Vicente Patoy.

The wounded were brought to the Claveria District Hospital, according to Claveria Vice Mayor Joseph Magallanes.

Another team of 10 policemen was dispatched to the area while the fire fight was going on. The gun battle lasted for about an hour until the rebels fled. Blood along the trail of their escape suggested some of them might have at least been wounded, the police report said.

The truck belonged to the family of Claveria Mayor Henedina Anduisa and was used to haul sand from their quarry. The civilians were the employees of the business. The police and military team had hitched a ride on the truck to get to Sitio San Jose, it was learned.

Daquil admits girlfriend, denies leaving family

By Nikko Dizon

LASHING OUT AT ATTEMPTS TO destroy his credibility, Col. Efren Daquil, the Air Force official who exposed alleged corruption in the military branch, yesterday said that "having a mistress does not make him a less credible man."

"I accept I had a girlfriend. I made a mistake. But does that mean I cannot expose wrongdoings that I see in the government?" Daquil told the Inquirer in an interview.

Contrary to the claim of his wife, Daquil said he did not abandon his family.

Bishops are free to speak out on politics, says CBCB head

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE NEW PRESIDENT OF THE influential Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) doesn't mind his fellow prelates speaking their minds on political issues.

"We are not telling them to shun politics because sometimes, we need to give our opinion," Jaro Archbishop Angel Lagdameo told reporters yesterday.

"Our bishops have their own perspectives, their way of looking at the realities in our country," he said. "To me, it's good to listen to these different perspectives because through them, we are able to enrich one another with our ideas."

But the soft-spoken prelate said politics should never be the "turf" of men of the cloth. Their vocation remained serving their flock through their pastoral mission, he said.

Lagdameo was reacting to reports he was advising his fellow bishops to stay away from politics, a traditionally contentious issue in this country where only a few priests stay quietly in the sacristy.

The same issue was raised by administration Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago who asked bishops not to get involved in the issue concerning the Arroyo administration's legitimacy.

Critics of the church hierarchy believe she pretty much got her wish when, save for a few outspoken clergymen, the CBCP as a whole, did not join the clamor for Ms Arroyo's resignation at the height of the "Hello Garci" scandal.

Lagdameo said bishops would speak out on political issues only when they are connected to the "life, faith, and morality" of their flock.

"If they have a connection to the main thrust of our apostolate, only then will we speak," he said in Filipino.

AFP starts audit of Air Force funds

By Alcuin Papa

THE ARMED FORCES OF THE Philippines (AFP) has ordered an audit of the finances of the Philippine Air Force (PAF) in the wake of Col. Efren Daquil's revelations that P30 million in savings were missing.

An audit team from the AFP's General Headquarters' Office of the Internal Auditor arrived yesterday morning at the PAFs headquarters in Villamor Air Base to start the investigation into the missing funds.

On Wednesday, Air Force Commanding General Lt. Gen. Jose Reyes had asked AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga to send an audit team to Villamor Air Base.

NBI 'sure' Gingoyo slay work-related

By Margaux C. Ortiz and Jhunnex Napallacan, ***PDI Visayas Bureau***

OFFICIALS OF THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation said yesterday they were almost sure the ambush-slay of Pasay City Judge Henrick Gingoyon was work-related.

"Our present evidence show that the assassination had something to do with one of the cases Gingoyon had handled," said NBI National Capital Regional Director Ruel Lasala.

Lasala said one of those who had filed a case in Gingoyon's court was police Senior Supt. Manuel Barcena, who had been mentioned as someone who may have had a motive to want Gingoyon dead.

Barcena "was not yet off the hook," said NBI officer in charge Nestor Mantaring. Barcena denied the accusation in a recent press conference.

President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday promised Gingoyon's family she would closely follow the case until the mastermind was unmasked and prosecuted.

The President made the assurance to Gingoyon's widow and children during an unscheduled visit to the wake for the judge at the Sacred Heart Parish Chapel on D. Jakosalem Street in Cebu City yesterday afternoon.

"We commit to dig deeper into the motive and to bring to the bar of justice the brains behind his killing," said the President in an Internet chat with Gingoyon's daughter, Hyacinth, 27, who is based in Los Angeles, California, and was unable to come home for the funeral of her father.

Slain Ninoy slay convict buried today; Imee sends flowers

By Nikko Dizon

EX-SGT. CORDOVA ESTELO, ONE of 16 soldiers convicted in the Aquino-Galman double murder case, will be laid to rest today, leaving behind a family that had long accepted he would never come home to them again.

"It's a hopeless case," Estelo's wife, Virgie said of the on-and-off efforts of the soldiers to have the murder case re-opened so that they could prove their innocence.

Virgie, 50, told the INQUIRER that since her husband's incarceration at the New Bilibid Prison (NBP) some 15 years ago, she had avoided talking about the case because it was like going against powerful people in the government. But she said her husband never lost hope that he would be free one day.

Last New Year's Eve, the 55-year-old Estelo was stabbed dead by a drunk inmate he was trying to pacify.

Virgie Estelo said that in the early years of her husband's imprisonment, she would receive between P1,000 and P3,000 month from an anonymous source. After several years, however, the allowance came in trickles and eventually stopped.

Ilocos Rep. Imee Marcos, eldest daughter of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos, sent a wreath.

"I really don't know why she sent us flowers," Virgie said.

The late president was blamed by Aquino's family for the murder.

From Villamor, Estelo's remains were to be taken to the NBP chapel for a 9am mass, where his friends—the rest of the so-called Aquino-Galman boys who had become his family through the years—were expected to say their final goodbyes.

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Number of hungry Pinoys hits new high, says survey

From page A1

nothing to eat at least once over a recent three-month period, according to the Social Weather Stations.

More than half of those surveyed also ranked themselves as poor, with those describing themselves as living in poverty rising to 57 percent in the fourth quarter of 2005, from 49 percent in the previous quarter, according to the results of the polling group's 4th Quarter Social Weather Survey.

Of the households surveyed, 16.7 percent reported experiencing hunger in the last quarter of 2005, a record high since SWS began hunger surveys in mid-1998, the polling firm said.

SWS said the proportional figure, or an estimated 2.8 million families, surpassed the previous peak of 16.1 percent in March 2001. The proportion of people going hungry has been in the double-digits since the second quarter of 2004.

Misleading picture

"These directly measured high levels of economic deprivation demonstrate yet again that orthodox economic statistics such as gross national product give a very misleading picture of the state of economic well-being," SWS said.

The survey was released just days after the President declared war "against poverty, hunger and unemployment," and ordered the release of P35 billion to "pump-prime" the economy.

Hunger was defined as having nothing to eat at least once in the past three months, excluding fasting for religious or other purposes.

SWS said the highest proportion of hunger reported—21.7 percent in December up from 12 percent in August 2005—was in the Mindanao region, which has been wracked by more than three decades of a Muslim rebellion, extremist terror and a communist insurgency.

Hunger also rose in Metro Manila to 21 percent from 16.7 percent and in the Visayas from 13.3 percent to 14.3 percent during the same period.

But the hunger rate dropped for the rest of Luzon, from 18 percent to 13.7 percent, during the survey period.

Randomly selected

The survey was based on interviews between Nov. 27 and Dec. 4 of 1,200 household heads randomly selected nationwide, including 300 from Metro Manila. It had a margin of error of 3 percent.

SWS described its survey as "the world's most rapid statistical system for directly tracking poverty and hunger at the national level."

The number of household heads who considered themselves poor jumped back to 57 percent after falling to 49 percent in August 2005, from 57 percent in May 2005.

Those who considered themselves poor said they needed about P10,000 a month to escape poverty in Metro Manila and P5,000 outside the capital region.

Lowering standards

"Such money-value thresholds were already reached as early as six years ago, even though the cost of living rose greatly every year. The failure of the thresholds to increase despite much inflation is a sign that the poor are actually lowering their real living standards," SWS said.

The hunger rate worsened among those experiencing severe hunger (families going hungry often or always) nationwide as their number rose to 3.9 percent (more than 600,000) in the fourth quarter, from 2.6 percent the previous quarter.

Filipinos experiencing moderate hunger (empty stomach once or a few times in the last three months) fell slightly to 12.8 percent (2.1 million families) in the fourth quarter from 12.9 percent in the third quarter.

Makati's the place to be, if you're a bird

From page A1

tion of the ordinance reads.

Nesting, resting place

The legislation further said that the city-run Makati Park and Garden, the Makati Catholic Cemetery and the Makati side of the Pasig riverbank had been a resting and nesting place for birds such as brown shrikes, pacific swallows, eurasian tree sparrows, scaly breasted munias, pied fan tails, yellow vented bul-buls, terns, yellow bitterns, herons, yellow wag tails, blue rock trushes and zebra doves.

The ordinance penalizes "hunting, shooting, harming, snaring, capturing and other similar acts that would disturb" birds flying or perching on trees or any structure in the city.

It also prohibits the "harvesting of bird eggs" and the destruction of bird's nests, natural habitats and food sources.

Also declared illegal were the possession or petting of wild birds or eggs "without justifiable reason," and the unlicensed trading of birds considered wild or those "that cannot be raised or bred in captivity."

Penalties

First time offenders may face a fine of P1,000 or a maximum jail term of one month, while those found to have violated the ordinance twice shall pay a P3,000 fine or face imprisonment of up to six months.

Succeeding violations have a P5,000 fine or a one-year prison term. In all cases, a trial court may decide to impose both the prescribed fines and jail time, depending on the gravity of the offense.

'Windows' rises from 9/11 ashes with Pinoy lumpia

From page A1

the World Trade Center. They opened their own eatery in Manhattan on Thursday, four years after the Sept. 11 attacks.

The terrorist attacks had killed 73 employees of Windows including chefs, waiters, bartenders, busboys and dishwashers. Bonded by the tragedy, the workers who survived decided to open an upscale restaurant named Colors.

Recipes from the workers' homelands can be found on the eclectic, international menu like the Philippine Lobster Lumpia, a spring roll with lobster, mint and sweet potato filling selling for $15 or P786. There's also the Congolese Seafood Bowl, a coconut cream smoked fish broth with tuna, clams, mussels and lobster, as well as edamame and chayote for $33 or P1,730.

"This restaurant is about diversity, bringing together different cultures," assistant chef Francesco Palmiero said as he stirred a Caribbean-style conch stew.

Colors, located a few doors down from Greenwich Village's Public Theater, is a 20-minute stroll from where Windows on the World used to be located.

Immigrants from about 25 countries are represented in Colors' 50-member cooperative, which will split any profits.

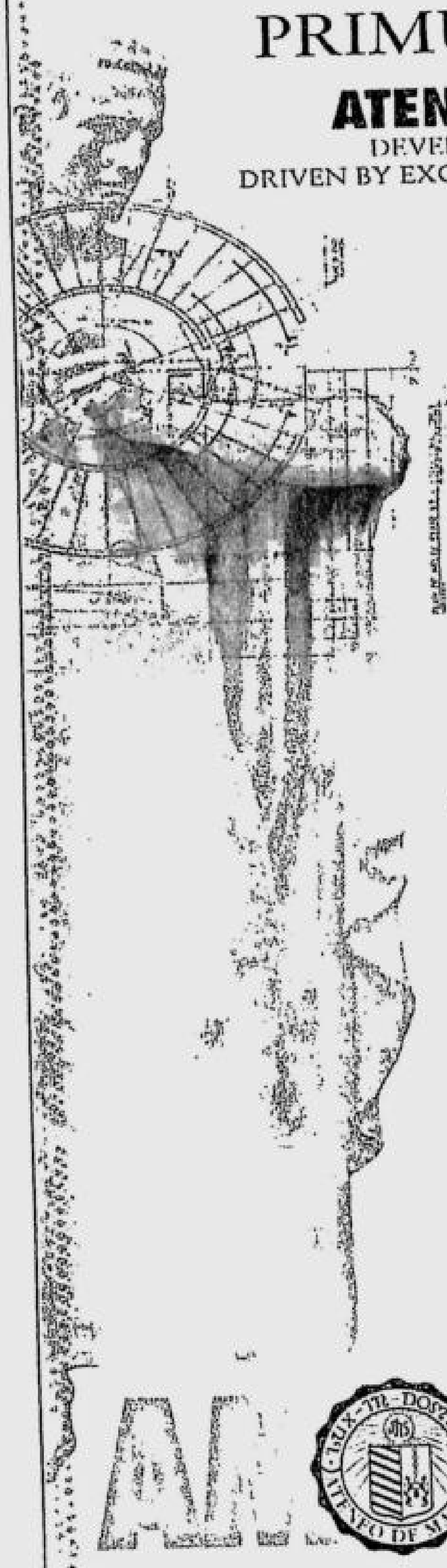
"Sometimes I think about it," said line cook Kissima Saho of Gambia, West Africa, as he chopped lobsters and pulled out the sweet meat. "I miss my crew members who lost their lives. I miss them. I miss the money I used to make."

Sous chef Jeane Pierre said, "There are a lot of Windows people here ... We were tight. From 9/11 we have a bond."

50-member co-op

Pierre, a native of Haiti, said the 50-member cooperative of former Windows employees was "trying to help New York build another restaurant, a new kind of restaurant."

"Here, this is a democracy," said bartender Patricio Valencia of Ecuador, who worked three years at Windows. "We make decisions together." *Reuters*



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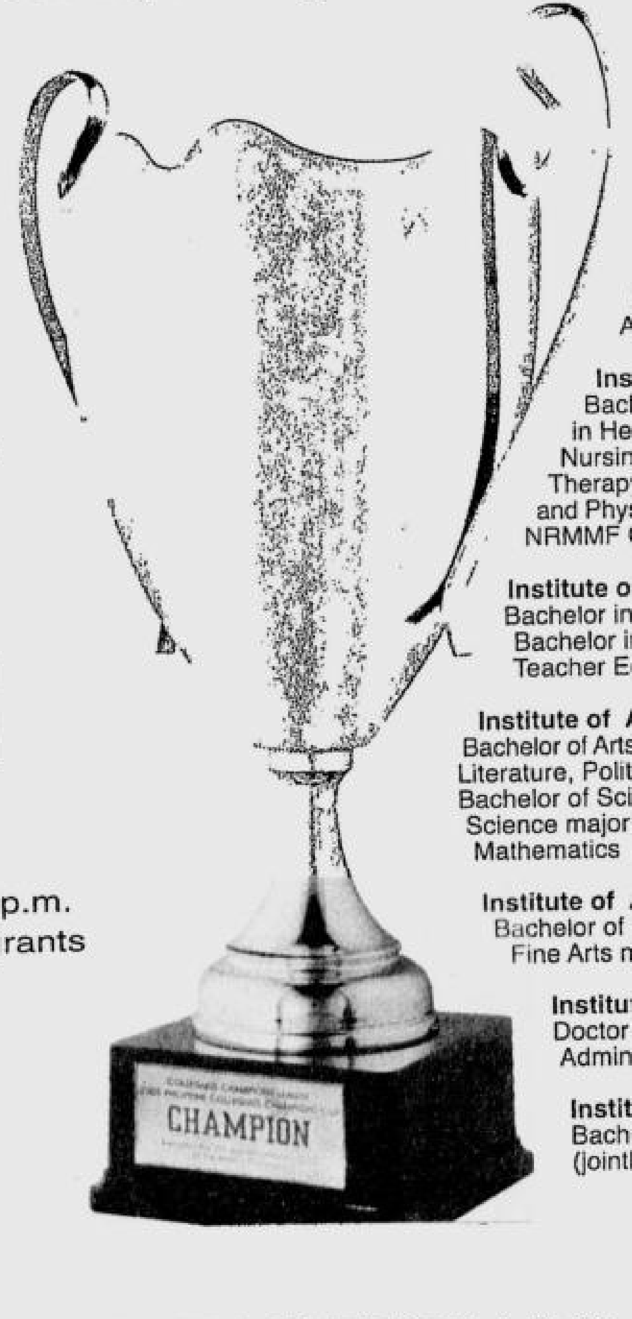

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Int'l church group seeks probe of summary killings

By Christian V. Esguerra

A HIGH-LEVEL DELEGATION OF United Methodist Church leaders is appalled at the spate of extrajudicial killings and harassment in the Philippines.

The group led by Bishop John Hopkins of Cleveland, Ohio, wrapped up a three-day fact-finding mission to the country yesterday and condemned the spate of attacks on journalists, church workers and human rights activists.

Composed of top Methodist leaders from Europe, Africa and Russia and representing 11 million church members worldwide, the delegation interviewed relatives of human rights victims and met with officials of Malacañang, the military, the US Embassy and others.

"If the killings do not stop, we pledge to continue the strongest possible advocacy to the governments of the Philippines and the United States and the United Nations to insist these injustices cease," the group said in a manifesto.

The group was alarmed over some 150 documented cases of unsolved killings and harassment all over the country between January and November last year alone, said the New York-based Rev. Liberato Bautista, assistant secretary general for UN and International Affairs of the General Board of Church and Society.

In the manifesto, the church leaders called on the government to conduct an "immediate and impartial investigation of all recent extrajudicial executions."

They also sought from President Macapagal-Arroyo a "commitment not to impose martial rule or other limitations on civil liberties or human rights."

They scored the government's purported failure to differentiate between "real subversives" and those who "work for justice and the poor."

"Undue labeling is a blanket endorsement of harassment and an open invitation for extrajudicial executions," Bautista told the INQUIRER.

The delegation noted that the relatives of the victims were convinced the killings and harassment were the handiwork of either the police or the military.

"Because of the high level of fear and intimidation among victims it is difficult to identify the perpetrators, making it appear that they enjoy impunity for their actions," the delegation said. "This threatens the quality of civic life in the Philippines."

Moro rebs pledge they won't attack US troops

MORO REBELS YESTERDAY pledged not to attack US troops scheduled to arrive in Mindanao for anti-terror training later this month.

US forces are to land in the town of Carmen, North Cotabato, according to the US military's joint special task force for the country.

Another batch of troops are scheduled next month for joint maneuvers with Filipino soldiers in Jolo, Sulu, a stronghold of the al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf gang and other Muslim armed groups.

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), which is negotiating peace with the government, said US troops will be left unmolested if they are carrying out humanitarian work and don't fire first.

"If they will accidentally enter MILF areas, they will not be attacked as long as they don't attack us," MILF spokesman Eid Kabalu told AFP.

"We will welcome it if they will be doing humanitarian work," he said.

The 12,000-strong MILF has links with the Abu Sayyaf and retains some measure of influence over the gang that is considered a "foreign terrorist organization" by the US State Department, military officials say.

The military has also alleged that the MILF harbored foreign militants from the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), the regional arm of the al-Qaida blamed for the deadly Bali bomb attacks last year and in 2002. *AFP*

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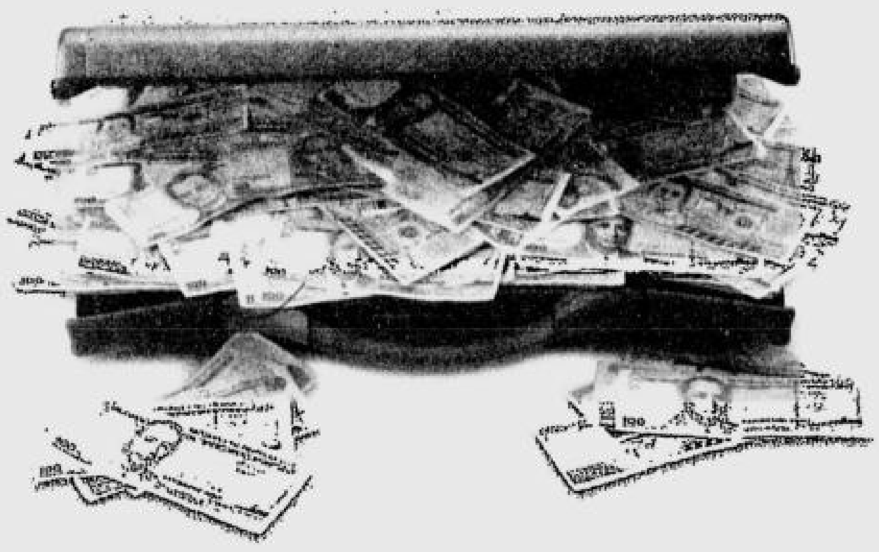

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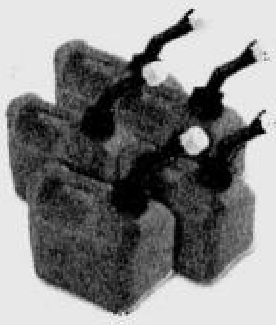

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FVR told: Speak for yourself on position

From page A1

himself and two opposition stalwarts during their Jan. 2 meeting.

As Ramos kept his enigmatic silence, one of the two people he talked with in that meeting—former Sen. Vicente (Tito) Sotto III—shed some light and said the three-sided meeting did touch on a proposed coalition among Ramos and former Presidents Corazon Aquino and Joseph Estrada.

"That was one of the topics that crossed our conversation," Sotto told reporters. "I can only say it was discussed somewhat. As to whether there was a final agreement, there was nothing to that effect."

Asked if Ramos was receptive to it, Sotto said: "I would not be able to give you details on that because we did not approach it that way." He did not elaborate.

Psy-war expert

A known psy-war expert, Ramos has said little about what transpired during his meeting with Sotto and Senate President Franklin Drilon.

The meeting coincided with renewed talk of unrest in the Armed Forces and revived opposition efforts to form a united front against Ms Arroyo and force her to step down.

A statement yesterday from Ramos' media consultant Ed Malay only seemed to add to the mystery.

Malay made it clear the former President remained opposed to the proposal by the Palace-created Consultative Commission to scrap the 2007 elections.

Ramos had branded the proposal a "monumental blunder."

"Former President Fidel V. Ramos remains convinced that the mid-term election scheduled for 2007 will promote political stability that would fuel the engines of economic growth as against the debilitating effects of extending the terms of elected officials who are ... ineligible to seek reelection," Malay said.

Malacañang in panic?

Separately, Sotto and Malay blasted Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye for saying that he had "very unflattering" details about Sotto and Drilon from the Jan. 2 meeting.

"Malacañang may be in a panic mode and is throwing mud ... Secretary Bunye is not in a position to say anything about the meeting, much less disclose so-called unflattering details relayed to him by Secretary Ermita because the two of them were not there," Sotto said in a press briefing.

"This is the best example of double-hearsay—incompetent, inadmissible and incredible."

Sotto showed reporters a picture of himself, Drilon and Ramos, all of them flashing Ramos' trademark "thumbs up" sign, taken during the meeting. He said Ramos sent him the photo with a message.

"Is this unflattering? It looks like a very enjoyable, cordial afternoon," Sotto said.

Bunye 'no longer credible'

He said that "fortunately" for himself and Drilon, Bunye was no longer credible.

"Nobody believes Secretary Bunye anymore. He is the same Bunye who had claimed and denied his claims so many times that his word is worthless.

"For the record, the FVR-Drilon and yours truly meeting was cordial and lasted more than two hours. President Ramos was a gracious host," Sotto said.

No-el discussed

Sotto said the Makati meeting also touched on the ConCom's recommendation to scrap the 2007 elections preparatory to a shift to a parliamentary form of government by 2010.

"I don't know if you can call that [an] agreement, but the three of us had a consensus that the no-election proposal is not good for the country," he said.

During the meeting, they voiced the hope that talks among the country's leaders on pressing issues and consultations with various sectors of society would lead to "something good for the country," Sotto said.

"If we unite, that will be good for the country," he said. "The bottom line is that we all agree that if the political leaders join hands, the country's affairs would be run well."

Sotto stressed that Ramos did not recruit him to join the administration and he did not try to convince Ramos to join the opposition. "We did not discuss anything to that effect," he said.

Asked if he saw the three of them sharing the same political stage in 2007, Sotto said: "That's a possibility."

When pressed if Ramos indicated his disappointment with Ms Arroyo during the meeting, Sotto said: "We reckoned that much of the conversation was better left within the room."

The only other detail of the meeting Sotto revealed was that Ramos wanted the plunder case against Estrada resolved as soon as possible, Inq7.net reported.

Bunye's impropriety

Malay said it was improper for a presidential spokesperson to be issuing claims based on information merely relayed to him since he was not present at the Makati meeting nor was he privy to the telephone conversation between Ramos and and Presidential Political Adviser Gabriel Claudio.

"How could the topic of discussion among FVR, Drilon and Sotto be unflattering to the latter two when practically nothing of what is now being speculated upon was discussed at length as the meeting drifted from one topic to another?" he said.

"As the presidential spokesman, I believe Press Secretary Bunye, who gained notoriety for presenting two versions of the Garci tapes, should limit his press briefings to issues and concerns affecting the President and should not venture into the realm of the unknown," Malay said.

Demolition job?

Malay said that Ramos would continue to meet with other political and economic leaders to get an accurate picture of the country's political and economic landscape.

Palace discrediting FVR

Malay said it was obvious that Malacañang was trying to discredit Ramos and was, in fact, at the forefront of the demolition campaign against the former President.

At the same time, Malay stressed that Ramos' attendance at the scheduled Lakas party national directorate meeting on Jan. 14 and at the planned Council of State meeting on Jan. 24 "should not be interpreted in another way" other than that he has to be there because he is the Lakas chair emeritus and that he is a former head of state.

In his talk with the INQUIRER, Biazon urged Ramos, Drilon and Sotto to reveal what they discussed if only to end the speculation the meeting had stirred.

"For as long as their statements are unclear, it (meeting) is clearly triggering different speculations in the minds of our people," he said. "Let's hear from the horses' mouths what the meeting was all about."

LAST RESPECTS: President Arroyo visits the wake for Judge Henrick Gingoyon at the Sacred Heart Chapel in Cebu City. His remains will be cremated on Sunday, and his ashes will be brought back to his residence in Bacoor, Cavite. *(See story on Page A2.)*

LYN RILLON

GMA to invite Cory, Erap to state council meet Jan. 24

From page A1

has said he is attending the meeting.

Cuenco said he spoke with Ms Arroyo after she visited the wake for slain Pasay City Judge Henrick Gingoyon in Cebu City.

"It would now be up to the Sandiganbayan to decide whether Estrada could go on this furlough. (Estrada's camp) could raise objections but what is important is that the invitations would be sent," he said.

Estrada is currently under house arrest in Tanay, Rizal, while the Sandiganbayan tries the plunder and perjury cases against him.

First time to be back

If allowed to attend the meeting, it would be the first time Estrada would set foot in Malacañang since his ouster.

The meeting is also being held in the wake of the government decision to cancel the stock distribution option of Hacienda Luisita, the sugar estate in Tarlac owned by the family of Aquino.

The move reportedly has further strained the President's ties with her erstwhile ally.

But a spokesperson for Estrada expressed doubts the deposed leader would want to have anything to do with the council meeting.

Estrada's position

"If (Estrada) will attend the Council of State meeting, he'd be validating the presidency of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo," said former Maguindanao Rep. Didagen Dilangalen.

The Estrada camp maintains that the deposed leader never resigned from office and that he remains the duly elected President.

Recognizing the Arroyo presidency is something the former President would not want to do.

"(The meeting) would only last for a few hours. Nothing would come out of it. It would only serve as a confirmation of the government's economic blueprint for the country. Now, is there such a blueprint?" Dilangalen said at the weekly Kapihan sa Newsdesk in Quezon City.

"If there's no blueprint, nothing would come out of the Council of State."

Dilangalen said the Estrada-led opposition already knew what it wanted to do for the people and that was to alleviate poverty and provide more jobs.

Highest body

Presidential Political Adviser Gabriel Claudio said that as provided for by the executive order that created the Council of State, Aquino, Ramos and Estrada, being former presidents, are supposed to be invited to sit in the highest consultative and advisory body in the government.

The meeting is expected to take up proposals for Charter change and the need for electoral reforms, among other things.

"We don't know the legal obstacles if he (Estrada) can legally and physically be allowed to leave Tanay," Claudio said in an interview over dzBB radio.

He said there was a need to get the permission of the Sandiganbayan to allow Estrada to attend.

Asked if Ms Aquino would attend the event, Claudio could only express the hope that the former President and erstwhile Arroyo supporter would do so.

"The objective of the meeting is after all, as President Arroyo and former President Ramos had wished, for wider cooperation and unity among political leaders," Claudio said in Filipino.

Set feuds aside

Aquino and Estrada have both called for the resignation of Ms Arroyo amid allegations that she rigged the 2004 presidential election. The President has denied any wrongdoing.

In a joint statement, Representatives Cuenco and Joel Mayo Almario (Lakas, Davao Oriental), chair of the House committee on games and amusement, appealed to the three former Presidents to attend the Council of State meeting "with an open mind and set aside their political and personal differences."

Almario said the President's goal in convening the council was "to forge greater national unity, solidarity and teamwork among political leaders and the people."

"We urge our political leaders to transcend their political affiliations and consider foremost the nation's welfare and future," said the lawmaker. *With reports from Norman Bordadora and Michael Lim Ubac*

GMA to revamp Cabinet

From page A1

and who is often called on to serve as a troubleshooter, was earlier touted to become her new chief of staff.

The post is currently occupied by Tomas Alcantara.

Cabral, one of the country's top cardiologists, was once director of the Philippine Heart Center (PHC).

She took a leave from the post to serve as national campaign manager for Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago when the latter ran for president in 1992 and for senator in 2001.

She was removed as PHC director during the term of President Fidel Ramos, Santiago's principal opponent for the presidency. Puno chairs Ms Arroyo's party, the Kabalikat ng Mamamayang Pilipino or Kampi.

Full-time work

Velasco will supposedly replace Rigoberto Tiglao at the PMS. Tiglao's appointment as ambassador to Greece late last year was confirmed shortly thereafter by the Commission on Appointments.

Defensor yesterday said he would file a leave from his duties at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to begin next week in order to concentrate on helping arrange Ms Arroyo's programs.

He said he had already been working full time with the President as the handler of her schedules and campaigns. He said he was actually part of the team that conceptualized her rice-and-noodles program.

"It's like my job during the campaign—I managed her sorties," he said.

To the suggestion that he could run the DENR via remote control, Defensor said: "It would be difficult. One should be hands-on."

But he said his going on leave to help the President with her official affairs did not mean he would soon be leaving the DENR to serve as her chief of staff.

"Nothing is final," he said when asked what his fate would be in the expected Cabinet revamp.

"Everything is still hanging," he added, referring to other expected movements in the President's official family.

Intact economic team

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves had previously said that the President would keep her economic management team to ensure continuity and sustain the momentum in economic reforms.

It was only six months ago that Ms Arroyo's economic team was gutted by the resignation of the "Hyatt 10," the group of key government officials who called on the President to step down.

Over the last three days, Malacañang announced three new appointees—Jesus Dureza, the President's adviser on Mindanao affairs, and now her adviser on the peace process; former Sandiganbayan Justice Narciso Nario, commissioner of the Presidential Commission on Good Government, and Gaudencio Mendoza Jr., finance undersecretary.

Faeldon now officially a fugitive; bail cancelled

From page A1

Philippinesto investigate his escape.

Faeldon, who fled his guards on Dec. 14 after a postponed hearing at the old Makati City Justice Hall, is among the 31 soldiers charged with coup d'etat for the July 27, 2003, takeover of the Oakwood Premier luxury apartments in Makati.

He has since established a website—www.pilipino.org.ph—where he called for civil disobedience to press the ouster of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Armed and dangerous

Filed 13 days before the scheduled coup d'etat case hearing on Jan. 17, the DOJ motion said "fugitive" Faeldon might use his expertise to once again rebel against the government and employ methods of "ruse and deception" to leave the country.

"As one of the leaders of the [Oakwood mutiny], and a highly trained member of the elite Force Reconnaissance Unit of the Philippine Marine Corps, Faeldon should be presently deemed armed and dangerous," the prosecutors said.

They said it was clear that Faeldon's escape had been planned, since he gave some reporters a taped statement explaining his escape shortly before he vanished.

"It is therefore paramount that he be physically stopped and recaptured by any peace officer before he finally escapes Philippine territorial jurisdiction and/or before he actually executes his overt violent plans to fight the government," the prosecutors said.

They said that Faeldon's escape was "a clear indication of his guilt for coup d'etat," and that he was "not worthy to be given temporary liberty, in the first place."

The judge had granted bail to the mutineers except for three of the supposed leaders—Captains Gerardo Gambala and Milo Maestrecampo, and Navy Lt. Antonio Trillanes.

In the dark

Military officials are still in the dark as to whether Faeldon had indeed visited the headquarters of the AFP Western Command (Wescom) in Palawan, as he had claimed.

Vice Admiral Ruben Domingo, Wescom chief, said they were still looking into the matter.

"I don't know [if Faeldon was at Wescom]. We are still verifying. We are not yet sure if he was there," Domingo told reporters in Camp Aguinaldo.

"It's possible because the area is not restricted," he said, but added that there had been no lapse in security.

Asked how Faeldon managed to elude arrest despite a nationwide manhunt, Domingo said there might have been soldiers in Wescom "who do not know him by face."

Domingo was among the military officers assigned to speak to the mutineers at Oakwood.

In a statement posted on his website the other day, Faeldon claimed to have visited the Wescom camp.

He posted three pictures of himself standing in what looked like the Wescom grandstand with a concrete marker in the background with the words "Western Command."

Another picture showed him standing in front of what looked like the Wescom multipurpose sports hall.

Faeldon posted as well video footage of himself walking in the supposed grandstand and in front of the supposed multipurpose hall.

He had facial hair and was wearing a black shirt and jeans.

But AFP spokesperson Col. Tristan Kison told reporters: "Those could be old pictures. If ever he was able to enter [the camp], it could only be for a short time, and only enough to take pictures."

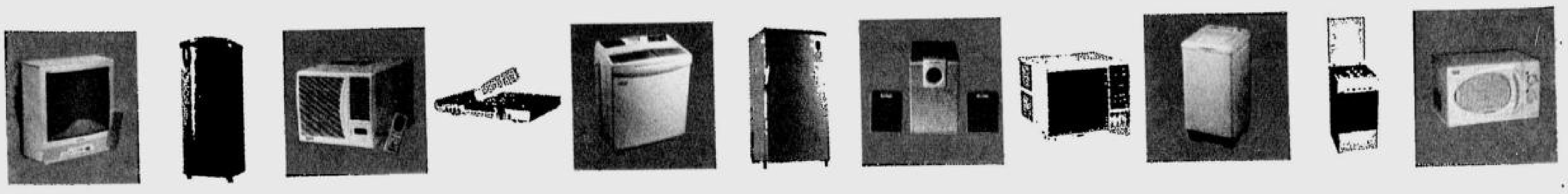
Coddled by sympathizers

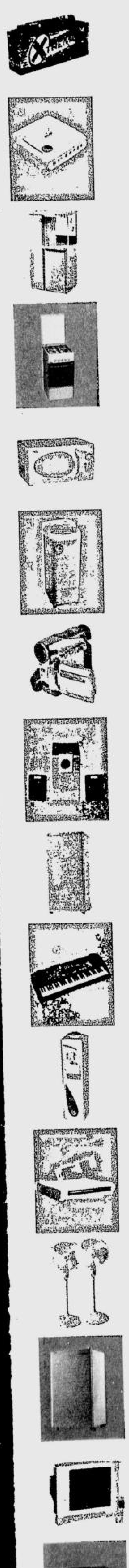
Faeldon, however, said in a statement he posted yesterday: "No one can stop me from entering these camps unless the corrupt generals themselves man the entrances. The soldiers and officers of the military who remain loyal to the people, and who value their honor, will not turn me in."

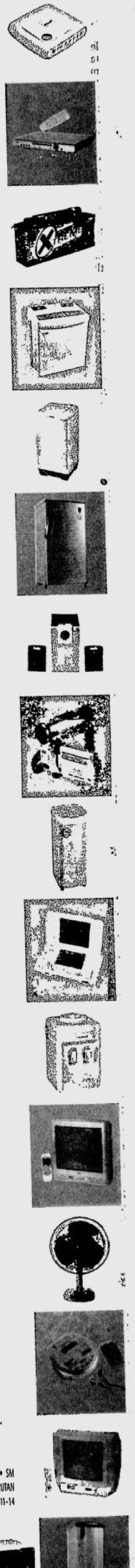
He said he was being "coddled" by groups in the military who were sympathetic to his cause: "There are others in the military who are committing civil disobedience together with me."

At a press conference in Puerto Princesa City, Wescom spokesperson Maj. Donald Gumiran said they were not hiding Faeldon.

"Any person, including a civilian, can go to the field and have his picture taken without the knowledge of Wescom," said Gumiran. *With reports from Alcuin Papa in Manila; Jofelle P. Tesorio, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*







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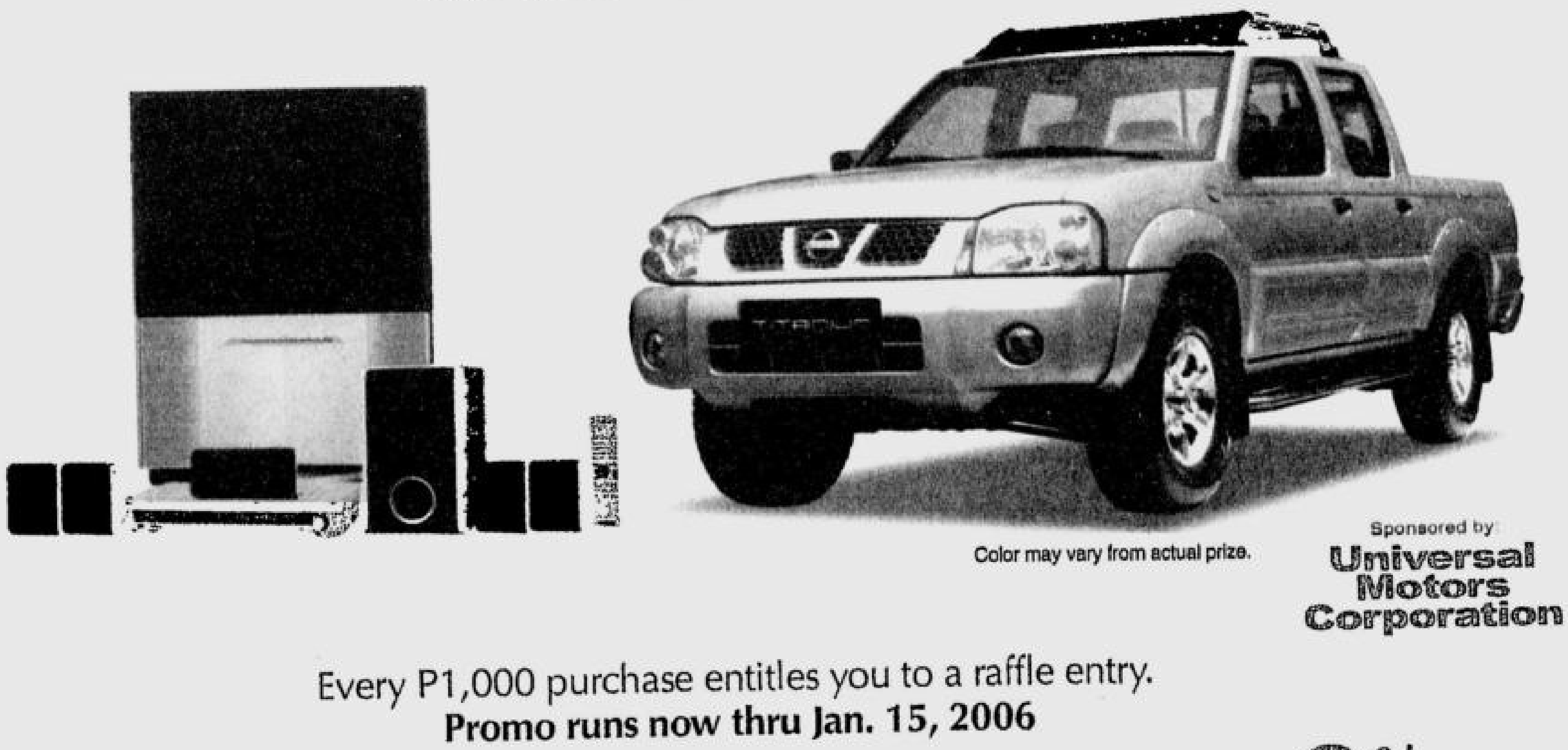

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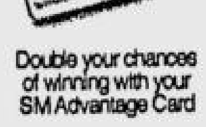

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Israel's 'Bulldozer' still in deep coma

ISRAELI Army Maj. Gen. Ariel Sharon during the Six Day War May 29, 1967, in the Sinai desert. AFP

JERUSALEM—ISRAELI Prime Minister Ariel Sharon was fighting for his life on Friday after a seven-hour operation to stop the bleeding in his brain caused by a massive stroke.

Whether or not he survived, Sharon's inevitable departure from the political stage was sure to have major repercussions in Israel, where the party he founded was reshaping the political landscape, and the broader Middle East—in keeping with his nickname, "The Bulldozer."

One of the dominant figures in a region rich in powerful personalities, the 77-year-old leader shrugged off a mild stroke last month and ploughed back into a punishing public schedule.

But on the eve of a minor operation to repair a hole in his heart, he was rushed by ambulance from his southern Israel ranch to a Jerusalem hospital for emergency surgery for a hemorrhagic stroke—the bursting of a blood vessel in the brain.

Sharon, a former general who has long seemed invincible to his countrymen, has been prime minister since 2001, guiding Israel through a five-year Palestinian uprising.

Opinion polls after last month's stroke showed he was still the clear favorite to win a March election as head of his new centrist Kadima party after quitting the rightist Likud.

Political analysts said no figure had dominated Israel to the same extent as Sharon since founding Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion. "The moment he goes, everything will change," said political scientist Shmuel Sandler of Bar-Ilan University.

Israeli commentators were quick to point out that Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, Sharon's longtime arch-foe, was two years his junior when he died in a Paris hospital in 2004 just weeks after falling sick.

Sharon has had to endure one of the most pressure-filled years of his long career. There were already signs it was taking its toll, and the bulky prime minister sometimes looked drawn.

The source of much of the upheaval was the Gaza withdrawal Sharon engineered last year despite fierce opposition from hardliners within his own Likud party. It was Israel's first removal of settlements on land Palestinians want for a state.

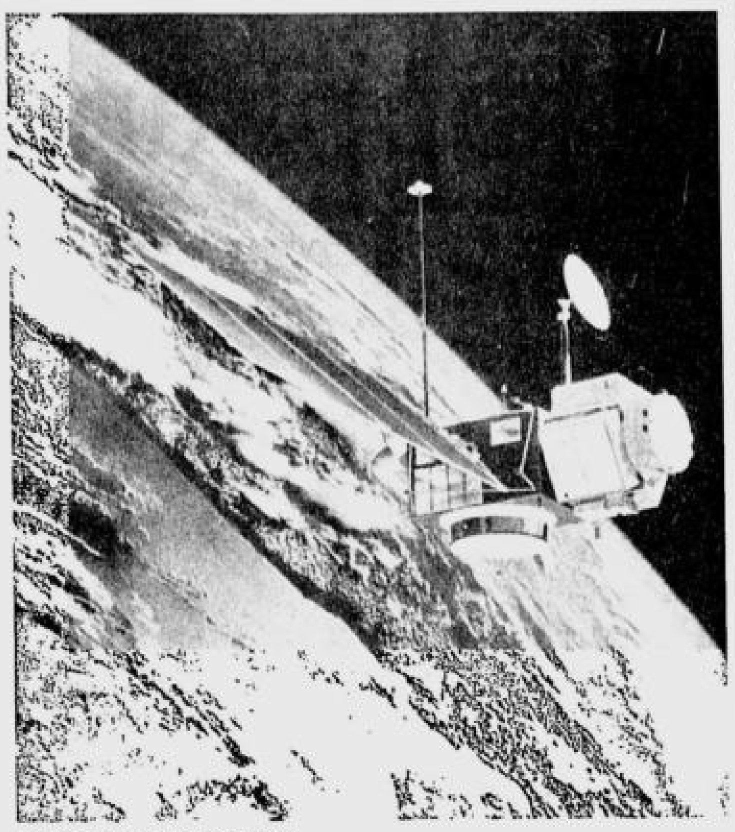
Once the pullout was complete, Sharon opted to break away from Likud to form the Kadima Party, saying he no longer wanted his hands tied in pursuing his diplomatic strategy for ending conflict with the Palestinians.

Not long ago, the notion that the one-time champion of Israel's settlements would tear down part of his own project was unthinkable.

But it was a typically bold move by Sharon, who as an army commander had a legendary record for battlefield victories but also for defying the military top brass.

Sharon drew Arab enmity for masterminding the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, during which Christian militia allies massacred Palestinians in two refugee camps, and later for his crushing response to a Palestinian uprising that erupted after he visited a sensitive Jerusalem shrine in 2000.

His decision to build a lengthy barrier on occupied West Bank land to stop suicide bombers from entering Israel was another controversial move, drawing rare criticism from the United States and deepening the hostility of Palestinians cut off from their land and livelihood. *Reuters*



DECOMMISSIONED
Artist's concept of the United States-French spacecraft Topex-Poseidon orbiting Earth. The spacecraft, which made El Niño a household term as it revolutionized understanding of the role of oceans' impact on climate, has been decommissioned after circling the globe 62,000 times over 13 years. AP

Cinnamon relieves diabetes

KUALA LUMPUR—MALAYSIAN researchers have found new proof that cinnamon can relieve diabetes by lowering sugar levels, a report said Friday.

A three-year study carried out by the Universiti Teknologi Malaysia showed that the spice has positive effects on Type II diabetes, the kind which typically develops during adulthood, the Star newspaper said.

Research chief Mohammad Roji said herbalists all over the world used cinnamon to treat diarrhea and arthritis because of its ability to improve circulation, heal wounds and prevent ulcers and allergies.

"In the last decade, laboratory studies have also revealed that cinnamon extract mimicked insulin action in the cells," he said, according to the daily.

Insulin regulates the body's ability to use sugars in the blood, but in people with diabetes the cells lose their ability to respond to the hormone.

Rapidly developing Asian nations are now being hit with rising rates of diabetes, which is linked to lifestyle factors such as obesity and unhealthy diets. *AFP*

Bird flu claims 3rd sibling in Turkey

VAN, TURKEY—A THIRD CHILD from the same family died of bird flu at a hospital within a week in this eastern Turkish city on Friday, doctors said.

Authorities are closely monitoring the H5N1 strain of the virus, fearing it could mutate into a form easily passed between humans and spark a pandemic killing tens of millions. Around 25 people were being treated for possible bird flu symptoms early Friday, as authorities from the health and agriculture ministries attempted to manage more outbreaks across the east of Turkey.

Hulya Kocyigit, 11, died only a day after her 15-year-old sister, Fatma Kocyigit, succumbed to the disease on Thursday. Their brother Mehmet Ali Kocyigit, 14, died on Sunday.

The siblings from the eastern town of Dogubayazit, who reportedly also played with the heads of the dead chickens, were hospitalized last week after developing high fevers, coughing and bleeding in their throats.

According to reports, the Kocyigit family took their fowl inside the house when temperatures fell at night and killed and ate the chickens when they got sick.

Most of the sick came from the town of Dogubayazit, around 200 kilometers from Van, the last large town in Turkey before the Iranian border. Two teenage children from Dogubayazit have died of bird flu this week. *AP*

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Red Roses For A Blue Lady
The Things We Did Last Summer
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Bloodiest day in Iraq in months

GIRLS NO LONGER
Twenty-year-old tour guides dressed in traditional kimonos are all smiles as they visit Tokyo's Meiji Shrine to celebrate Japan's Coming of Age Day, Jan. 6. Young people turning 20 are officially recognized as adults in Japan.
AFP

BAGHDAD, IRAQ—SUICIDE BOMBERS INFILTRATED a line of police recruits and a crowd of Shiite pilgrims Thursday as insurgents killed 125 civilians and five US soldiers, escalating their fight as political groups worked to forge a coalition government.

With the two-day death toll from insurgent attacks surpassing 183—a stark upsurge in bloodshed following the Dec. 15 parliamentary elections—Iraq's main Shiite religious party warned Sunni Arabs supporting the insurgency that its patience was wearing thin.

Iraq's Shiite prime minister denounced the violence as an attempt to derail the political process at a time when progress was being made toward a broad-based government that would include the Sunnis, possibly weakening the insurgency.

The country's largest Shiite party, SCIRI, also blamed Sunni Arab extremists, but in a chord struck by several politicians Thursday the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution also condemned policies it claimed were imposed by the US-led coalition that were hampering Iraqi security forces' counterterrorism work.

The US Embassy in Baghdad said it was "appalled" by the attacks. "This terror aims simply to kill innocent Iraqis and provoke further conflict between them," the embassy said.

Thursday's death toll reflected a level of violence rarely seen since the fall of Saddam Hussein in 2003 and included the deaths of five American soldiers killed by a roadside bomb.

The American convoy was south of Karbala when it was attacked around 10 a.m., though it had been conducting a mission unrelated to the suicide attack in the Shiite holy city, Lt. Col. Barry Johnson said. At least 2,188 members of the US military have died since the war began, according to an Associated Press count.

A suicide bomber wearing a vest packed with ball bearings detonated his explosives only 15 minutes later on a busy pedestrian path about 30 meters from the Imam Hussein shrine in central Karbala, 80 kilometers south of Baghdad.

The bombing, on a day pilgrims arrive for Friday prayers, killed 63 people and injured 120, Karbala police spokesperson Rahman Meshawi said.

In the attack's aftermath, a woman and an infant girl in a bright red jumpsuit lay in a pool of blood, their faces covered by a sheet. Television images showed men ferrying the wounded in pushcarts.

In Ramadi, a bomber standing among about 1,000 police recruits struck about 40 minutes after the Karbala attack, killing 56 people and injuring 60, said Mohammed al-Ani, a doctor at Ramadi General Hospital.

The bomber struck at a police screening center in Ramadi, an insurgent stronghold 115 kilometers west of Baghdad. Marine Capt. Jeffrey S. Pool said recruits later got back in line to continue the screening process.

In other violence Thursday, a suicide car bomb killed three Iraqi soldiers in Baghdad, Lt. Col. Thamir al-Gharawi said, and gunmen killed three people in separate incidents, police said, raising Thursday's death toll to 130.

The Karbala bomber detonated a vest stuffed with about eight kilograms of explosives and several hand grenades, Col. Razaq al-Taie said. At least five Iranian Shiites were among the dead, Meshawi said.

Mohammed Saheb, who was injured in the head by the attack, said he travels to the shrine every Thursday.

"I never thought that such a crime could happen near this holy site," said Saheb. "The terrorists spare no place from their ugly deeds. This is a criminal act against faithful pilgrims. The terrorists are targeting the Shiites."

A toy vendor on the pedestrian street said he lost consciousness after the explosion.

"I was selling toys near the shrine when I flew into the air because of the explosion," Akram Saleh said from a hospital bed, where he was being treated for burns and bruises.

A would-be suicide car bomber arrested on Tuesday before he could explode his vehicle told Karbala police a number of suicide bombers were in the city, said a police commander who spoke on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to speak to the media. He refused to say if any others had been arrested.

Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari said the attacks were the insurgents' response "to the successful political process," while Karbala's governor, Aqeel al-Khazraji, blamed "takfiris and Saddamists" for the attack. The takfiri ideology is followed by extremist Sunni Muslims bent on killing anyone they consider an infidel, even fellow Muslims. Al-Qaida in Iraq leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi is a takfiri, and his group often has targeted Shiites.

A senior official in the Iraqi Accordance Front, the main minority Sunni coalition, denounced the violence and called for solidarity among Iraqis to defeat it, but he blamed Iraq's leaders for allowing it to happen.

"This government has not only failed to end violence, but it has become an accomplice in the cycle of violence by adopting sectarian policies and by weakening the state and strengthening militia groups," Izzat al-Shahbandar said.
AP

53 killed in Mecca building collapse ahead of pilgrimage

MECCA, SAUDI ARABIA—RESCUE WORKERS still hoped Friday to find survivors in a four-story building that collapsed in Islam's holiest city, killing at least 53 people and marring the start of the annual gathering of millions of pilgrims.

Under spotlights, hundreds of men worked with cranes and other tools through the night to remove huge slabs of concrete from the site of Thursday's collapse. Some workers cut through steel girders with blow torches and others used microphones to listen for signs of life.

Interior Ministry spokesperson Maj. Gen. Mansour al-Turki said Friday the toll had reached 53 dead and two injured, the official Saudi Press Agency reported on its website.

"I believe that people are trapped and I still hope to find some survivors," said Brig. Hamad al-Ahmadi, who oversaw the night operation.

Relatives of people who were in the building waited all night at the scene for news of their loved ones. But workers recovered only dead bodies Friday.

As the rescue operation continued, more than one million pilgrims attended Friday prayers in the Grand Mosque. They had come to Mecca for the annual hajj pilgrimage that begins Monday.

The building that collapsed, Lulu'at al-Khair, was just 60 meters from the Grand Mosque. It had shops and restaurants and was used as a hotel during the hajj.

Talha al-Nizi, a Tunisian pilgrim guide, said that at lunchtime Thursday his group had just returned to their hotel next to Lulu'at al-Khair.

"As I moved to step into my hotel, the whole building collapsed in front of my eyes. The whole street was full of dust," said al-Nizi.

The state deployed about 1,000 rescue workers, medics and police to the scene.

"Fortunately the building was almost empty when it collapsed, because most of the residents were in the holy shrine," civil defense Major General Alwani, who did not give his first name, told state-run Al-Ekhbariya television. "Most of the casualties were passers-by."

An unidentified government official told Al-Ekhbariya the 40-year-old building's foundations were cracked and weak.

The operator of the hotel, Habib Turkestani, however, told The Associated Press that the 25-year-old structure was sound.

"The building was in good shape, and what happened was a matter of fate and divine decree," Turkestani said.

He said the hotel guests included 18 French citizens of Tunisian origin, four British nationals of Bangladeshi origin and four people from the United Arab Emirates. Other victims were believed to be from Egypt and Indonesia.

Tunisia said that four of its nationals were killed and six other Tunisians were admitted to hospitals.

The injured were treated in hospitals in Mecca and Jiddah, about 40 miles to the east.

A Pakistani pilgrim at a nearby hotel, Rahimi Farouki, said he had received several calls from relatives and friends who thought he had been killed.

"It was a horrible accident, but my Muslim brothers who died will go to paradise," he said, referring to all the victims.

According to Islam, anyone who dies on the way to or during the hajj is a martyr and goes to heaven.

The hajj is one of the five pillars of Islam that Muslims are obliged to undertake at least once in their lifetime if they can afford it. The other pillars are to profess that there is only one God and Mohammed is His prophet, to pray five times daily, to give alms and to fast during the holy month of Ramadan.
AP

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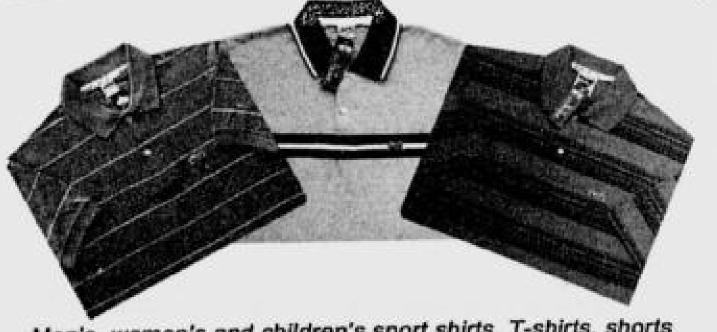

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IMPORTANT NOTICE TO MAYNILAD WATER CUSTOMERS

MWSS interconnection of new Aqueduct 6 to Aqueduct 5 will reduce West Zone water supply by 20 % from January 10 to 14, 2006

The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System will be decommissioning a leaking portion of the 3,600-mm Aqueduct 5, one of the aqueducts through which raw water from Angat Dam is delivered to Metro-Manila, starting Tuesday, January 10, 2006. At the same time, the MWSS will interconnect and commission a newly laid bypass, Aqueduct 6, which will connect Aqueduct 5 to Tunnel 3 in Ipo, Norzagaray, Bulacan. These activities are expected to last until Saturday, January 14, 2006.

As a result, the water production of Maynilad Water will drop from 2,170 mld. (million liters per day) to 1,800 mld., reducing by 15 to 20 percent the water supply and availability in the West Zone for 120 hours starting at 12:01 a.m., Tuesday, January 10, 2006, until 12:01 a.m., Saturday, January 14, 2006.

Consequently, Maynilad customers residing in high portions of the West Zone will experience low pressure to no water, specifically in the following locations: Lagro, Damong Maliit, Filinvest 1 and 2, Commonwealth, Gulod, Sta. Lucia, Forest Hills, San Bartolome, Payatas, Batasan Hills, Galas, Project 7 and 8, San Francisco del Monte, Quirino, all in Quezon City;

Llano, Bagong Barrio, UE Hills Subdivision and GSIS Hills Subdivision in Caloocan; Dampalit in Malabon; Sta. Quiteria, Gen. T. de Leon, Karuhatan, Pio Valenzuela, San Miguel Village and Malinta in Valenzuela; Meycauayan and Obando in Bulacan;

Sampaloc, Sta. Cruz, Binondo, Quiapo, Sta. Mesa, Pandacan, and Paco in Manila; Pasay City; Marcelo Village, Better Living, Sun Valley Subdivision, United Parañaque Subdivision, San Antonio Valley 10 and 11, and Baltao in Parañaque; Pulang Lupa in Las Piñas; and Cavite,

To cope with this contingency, Maynilad will be dispatching mobile tankers to attend to the needs of affected customers.

In view of these developments, affected customers are advised to store water good for the duration of the water service interruption. They may also call Maynilad Water Hotline 1626 or text Maynilad through SMART 7001626 for the water-rationing schedule.

We apologize for the inconvenience that will result from these projects which, however, will result in better service to Maynilad customers.

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OPINION

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Ladies first

EDITORIAL

IF A WOMEN'S SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE PHILIPPINES were to be written, the name of Cecilia Muñoz Palma would figure prominently in it. As the first woman justice of the Supreme Court, she takes her place alongside other Filipinas who achieved "firsts": Maria Francisco de Villacerna, the first Filipina lawyer; Honoria Acosta-Sison, the first physician; Catalina Arevalo, the first dentist; Encarnacion Alzona, the first historian; Leona Florentino, the first poet; Rosario de Leon, the first woman writer; Magdalena Jalandoni, the first woman novelist; Celia Castillo, the first sociologist; Filomena Francisco, the first pharmacist; Belen Enrile Gutierrez, the first certified public accountant; Socorro Simuangco, the first dermatologist; Carmen Concha, the first film director and producer; Criselda J. Garcia-Bausa, the first paleontologist; Ali Macawaris, the first oceanographer; Geronima Pecson, the first senator; Asuncion Arriola Perez, the first Cabinet secretary; Jovita Fuentes, the first international opera star; Lt. Col. Ramona Palabrica-Go, the first battalion commander; Ana Bayle, the first international supermodel; Lea Salonga, the first to win the Olivier and Tony best actress awards; and of course, Corazon Aquino, the first woman president.

It is true that many of the achievements of these Filipinas came about with suffrage and greater women's rights during the 20th century, but Filipinas during the Spanish era had achieved a number of firsts of their own. For example, the first Filipina education manager was Sor Candida Ocampo, who became directress of Colegio de Santa Isabel, the oldest girls' school in the Philippines. The first founders of indigenous religious congregations were Mother Francisca and Mother Ignacia. Their orders, the Dominican Siena Sisters and the Religious of the Virgin Mary, are two of the biggest congregations for nuns today, with some members even running missions and schools abroad. Since both are candidates for canonization, Mother Francisca and Mother Ignacia may also become the first Filipina saints.

Perhaps it is because of the achievements of these Filipinas during and after the Spanish era that Palma, a product of Benedictine Catholic education at St. Scholastica's College (she was not named after Santa Cecilia for nothing, to whom the music-loving Benedictine nuns dedicated their music hall), as well as of the public school system during the American era (she took up Law at the University of the Philippines), was able to achieve a number of firsts: first female prosecutor in 1947, first woman judge at the Court of First Instance in the 1950s, first female justice of the Supreme Court in 1973, and president of the Constitutional Commission in 1986.

But the firsts she achieved would have remained merely on the level of statistics had Palma not distinguished herself. She responded with professionalism and boldness to the challenges that came with the moment and the milieu.

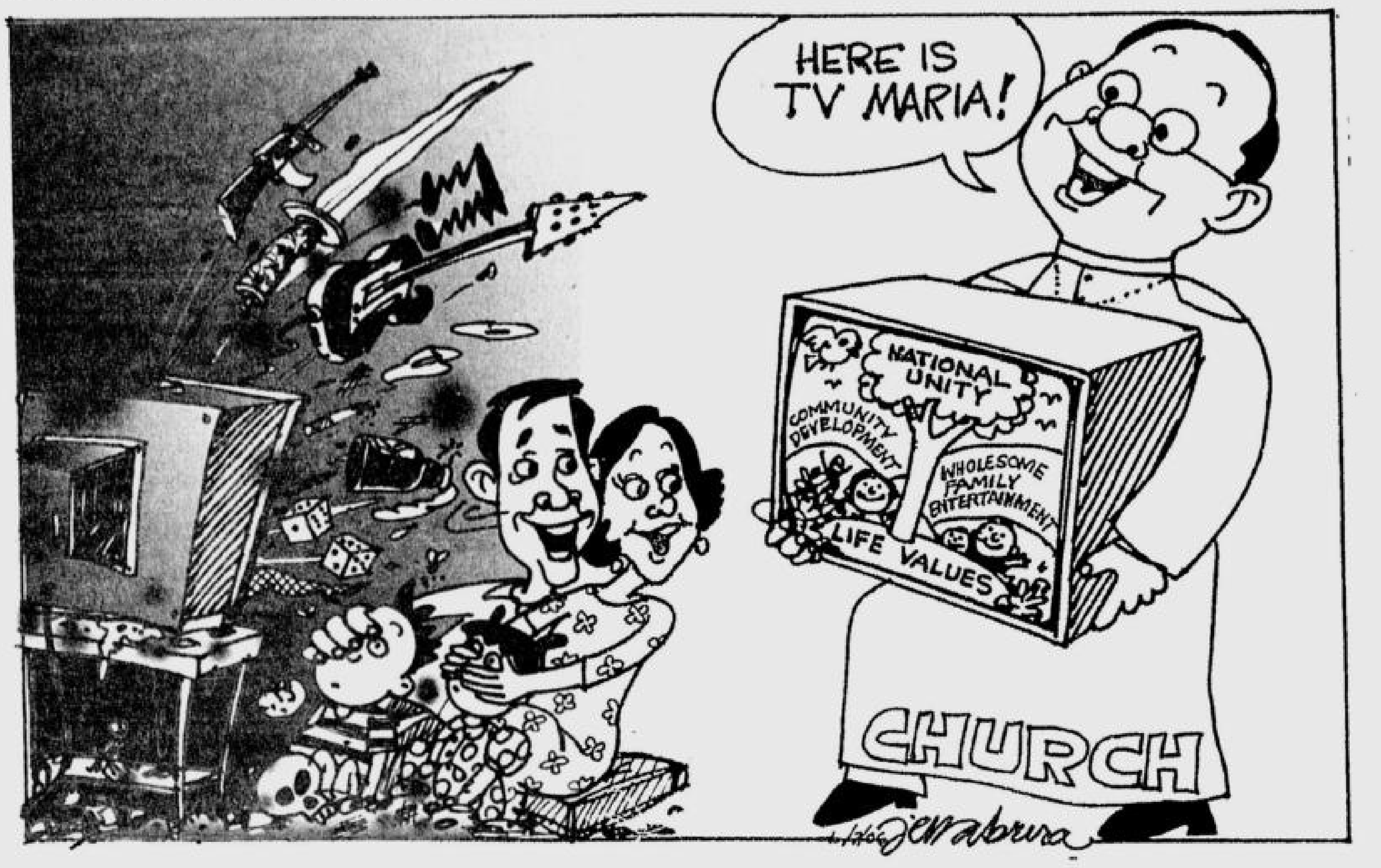
The milieu was the social environment of repression and curtailment of civil liberties engendered by martial law. The moment was her address on World Law Day in 1975 in which she called for the lifting of martial rule. The exhortation was cheered by members of the bar and libertarians all over, but not by Chief Justice Vicente Abad Santos, who called her an "ingrate" for embarrassing President Ferdinand Marcos, who had appointed her to the Court in 1973.

She repeated the act when she dissented against the majority opinion in the habeas corpus case of Sen. Jose W. Diokno.

In both cases, Palma made her point with rationality and conviction, without the hysterics we usually mistake for feistiness. Later, she challenged the dictatorship as an opposition lawmaker in the Batasang Pambansa, helped stir the transition as Concom president, and helped professionalize government charities as chair of the Philippines Charity Sweepstakes Office.

Perhaps it is what we would best remember her for: Cecilia Muñoz Palma making her point with legal and constitutional brilliance, moral conviction and confident calmness, without brashness and shrill theatrics. She fashioned her belief and philosophy after her icons, like St. Scholastica, who helped her brother, St. Benedict, pull Europe out of the Dark Ages, and Roberto Concepcion, the chief justice who deprived himself of a generous pension when he left the bench short of retirement in protest of martial law.

Cecilia Muñoz Palma was a paragon of the best of Filipino womanhood. With her death at the age of 91, she passes now to immortality, embodying the best of the Filipino, regardless of sex.



A Macapagal-Arroyo Court?

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

WITH THE FESTIVE SEASON OVER, LET US hope that the Supreme Court will buckle down to work after rehearsing and performing the rigodon the justices danced at Chief Justice Hilario Davide's retirement party at the Manila Hotel last month. This is the first time, as far as I know, where the members of the highest tribunal displayed their terpsichorean talents, such as they were, to the amusement of the tolerant audience.

There are still many important cases awaiting the decision of the Supreme Court under the new leadership of Chief Justice Artemio V. Panganiban, who claims he has so far punctually disposed of all the cases raffled to him. His exemplary record should be a goal to emulate, perhaps even to surpass, by the associate justices whose pace in deciding their own assignments cannot be exactly described as speedy.

One reason for this weakness is verbosity. I have remarked on this problem more than once in this column. Where a case can be disposed of in a few pages, a justice can expand it to scores of repetitive citations where one or two precedents will suffice to justify his conclusions. The narration of the facts alone will cover much of the opinion where even the irrelevant details will be recited. The motive may be to impress the reader that the ponente did his homework when it was his anonymous researcher who discharged it.

A case in point that I discussed in an earlier article was the challenge to the second impeachment resolution against Chief Justice Davide, 415 SCRA 44, where the majority opinion covered all of 74 pages and the concurring and dissenting opinions extended the decision by another 227 pages, to occupy one-third of the volume. The general effect was a total bore, not to mention the government expense of printing the superfluity.

If the justices hoped to impress the public with their erudition, they failed intolerably. Not many people, including law students and even practicing lawyers, had the patience to read through the laborious decision, preferring instead to rely on the newspaper reports that told it all without needless pedantry. The justices did not get the publicity they must have sought but vainly.

In Agan vs. Piatco, 402 SCRA 612, the Supreme Court ruled against the respondent in a 10-4-1 decision that covered 123 pages including the concurring and dissenting opinions. The motion for reconsideration was denied in another 32 pages where, significantly, the majority was reduced to 7, 2 more joined the dissenters, and another 2 took no part. The case is now under arbitration in Singapore and the United States, where the awards will expectedly be shorter and simpler.

I also hope that the Supreme Court will study their cases with more studious attention before making their decisions instead of coming off half-cocked, as it were, only to change their minds and reverse themselves later. I have in mind the case of Secretary of Justice vs. Lantion, 322 SCRA 160, where the 9-6 decision ruled in favor of Mark Jimenez and the motion for reconsideration sustained the petitioner by an also 9-6 vote. The ponencia was contained in 67 pages and the resolution reversing it in 34, for a total of 101 pages.

This is not to say that the Supreme Court should always stick to its original decision no matter how unpopular it may be. The case of Umil v. Ramos, 187 SCRA 311, (decided during my time) received much public censure but was sustained in the motion for reconsideration although this time there were more dissenting opinions, obviously to placate public opinion. To the two original dissenters, three more justices joined to criticize the majority ponencia. But many thought their change of mind was more political than judicial.

A more recent example is the case involving the Mining Law, which was declared partly unconstitutional by a vote of 8-5-1 in 117 pages of Vol. 421 of the SCRA. Eleven months later, the decision was reversed in a 10-4-1 resolution consisting of 246 pages, including the separate opinions. It was reported in more than one-half of Vol. 445 of the SCRA. The justices must have spent a lot of time reconsidering the case even as they presumably had also deliberated carefully on the original ponencia. They probably thought they were writing for posterity when they could not even get the attention of their present audience.

Looking at the present Supreme Court, my worst fear is not of the above-discussed flaws but its possible lack of independence, especially from Malacañang. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo has so far never lost a case before the highest tribunal and it is not unlikely that her record will remain unbroken.

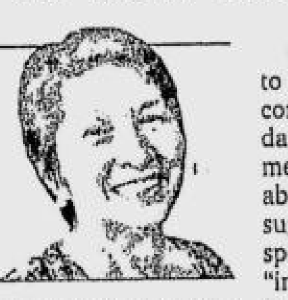
The reason is that 10 of the current justices were appointed by her, including Chief Justice Panganiban, who was originally appointed by President Ramos like Justices Puno and Quisumbing but owes his present position to GMA. And there is still the present vacancy in the Court she will also fill, let alone the fact that Puno and Quisumbing are both hoping for her blessings when Panganiban retires next December.

So how will the Supreme Court decide the constitutional challenge to President Arroyo's Executive Order No. 464? Don't hold your breath.

Three-pronged strategy to sell Charter change

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod



FOR A LOT OF PEOPLE, A PARLIAMENTARY form of government has a lot to recommend it, albeit for different reasons. Our legislators, for example, want it badly because it increases their power tremendously, since they will be taking over the functions of the executive branch of government as well, the president being relegated to a figurehead. Moreover, any worries about term limits and having to foist a wife or son or daughter on their constituencies as seat-warmers because of term limits will be a thing of the past; parliamentary systems don't have them.

A parliamentary system would also be very welcome to those who want to lead the country but don't have the mass appeal to win in direct elections. It would give fresh impetus to the ambitions of people like Jose de Venecia or Eduardo Cojuangco Jr., or even wannabes like, say, Prospero Pichay Jr., or, for that matter, the rest of the powerful political families. They don't have to contend with the people (except for those in their constituency) anymore, they will be operating in a milieu where they are at their best: the give-and-take of negotiations with other politicians or families, wheeling and dealing for power or power-sharing.

Then there are certain big businessmen, e.g., Lucio Tan and his ilk, who would find the parliamentary system much more convenient (read: cheaper), for the simple reason that they will only have two branches of government to "capture" instead of the present three. One can even imagine them (a horrifying thought) deciding not just to control the country indirectly, but to have direct control or influence by themselves running for parliament from a relatively safe seat, and then exercising political leverage, including aspiring to be prime minister.

No wonder, then, that all these groups are pushing mightily for a parliamentary system, although none of them will give the real reasons for their advocacy. But while the Filipino is exasperated by the kind of governance s/he has been made to suffer under, s/he is not willing to forego the privilege of voting directly for the head of government. While s/he might accept that the present Constitution can be improved, s/he is definitely leery (60 percent against) of a parliamentary form. So how to get them to change their mind?

What the parliamentary advocates have come up with is a three-pronged strategy.

The first prong is to present the political, economic and social problems of the country—from poverty to unemployment to corruption, to crime, to insurgency, to terrorism—as either directly linked to our presidential system, or as being impervious to solution under a presidential system (how these are linked, or why a presidential system will not solve it, they do not elaborate). The parliamentary system is then presented as the cure-all.

There is, it can be stated categorically, absolutely no empirical basis for making such assertions. But that does not stop them from making them anyway. I can only envy the ability of my colleague, former Socio-Economic Planning Secretary Felipe Medalla, to illustrate his points with down-to-earth analogies. But let me try: To say that the country's problems are caused by a presidential system and can be cured by a parliamentary system is like saying that a person's diarrhea is caused by the toilet he uses, and can be cured by changing toilets. Or that malaria is caused by sleeping with a person, and can be cured by sleeping with another person.

Our parliamentary advocates are not about to put all their eggs in one basket. So they come up with the second prong of the strategy: dangling other attractions alongside a parliamentary shift that will make it more acceptable. In other words, offering a spoonful of sugar to help the medicine go down. The spoonful of sugar, for those who are sick of an "imperial Manila," is the promise of federalism. On the other hand, for those businesspersons and professionals who have foreign clients or connections, or who are anxious for foreign investments, the spoonful of sugar is in the form of "liberalizing" the economic provisions of the present Constitution.

These attractions are more smoke and mirrors than substance. The promise of federalism is just that, a promise. It will not happen for a long time (10 years?) and, if ever, only after at least 60 percent of the areas vote for autonomy. Only when that threshold is reached can a new federal government be established.

As for the so-called liberalization of the economic provisions, as I have discussed in various fora, these amendments are neither necessary nor sufficient conditions for foreign investments to come in. To use another analogy, if a house is termite-ridden, opening its doors and windows wide will not attract possible occupants.

And what is the third prong? For this, our advocates use what they are most familiar with: out and out bribery. Thus we have the transitory provision "No-El" or no elections in 2007. All local officials (and guess what, all legislators as well, free-riding all the way) whose terms will end in 2007 will be given three years extra in office if the parliamentary system (as well as the other constitutional changes) is approved. What better incentive for them to work for such approval?

Brilliant? Maybe. But given the resulting outcry, they may have outsmarted themselves. For the country's sake, one fervently hopes so.

Why not four presidents talking?

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

REPORTS SAY EFFORTS ARE BEING TAKEN BY some opposition figures to bring about a meeting among three former presidents, Corazon Aquino, Fidel Ramos and Joseph Estrada, to work out a reconciliation program that would benefit the country's poor. But why settle for three presidents when there could be four talking? Why not bring in President Macapagal-Arroyo? This would be more realistic and much more could be accomplished. Nothing would be more reassuring to our troubled people than the sight of the members of this most exclusive club gathering in, say, balmy Tanay, over Cory's favorite dinner recipe, Erap's favorite wine (cheaper than Petrus, in keeping with the hard times), FVR's favorite cigar and GMA's favorite brandy. Imagine that! How it would loosen up old pent-up hurts. If it should come to pass, they could also map out a common program of action against poverty and terrorism.

* * *

In the United States, a dialogue among surviving presidents is not unusual. Recall that former Presidents Bill Clinton and George Bush Sr. carried out morale- and fund-raising missions for President George W. Bush in the aftermath of the tsunami disaster. Recall, too, how former President Jimmy Carter has been carrying out missions as US ambassador of goodwill, specifically to popularize Habitat for Humanity and help monitor elections in foreign trouble areas.

Over the past two days, my feedback from people from various quarters, who have all retained a high regard for FVR, is that they hope he'd truly work on what could be his outstanding legacy. That is, work for national unity and usher the shift to a parliamentary form of government. Maybe FVR could host this blockbuster dinner in Tanay.

* * *

Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban, in his eulogy of the late Supreme Court Justice Cecilia Muñoz Palma at the necrological services, called her "the judiciary's spiritual mother." Panganiban recalled Palma's sterling record as a brilliant lawyer and jurist as well as a trailblazer for women in the judiciary as our first female prosecutor, first woman judge of the Court of First Instance and first female justice in the Court. He also paid tribute to her as role model of independence, integrity, industry and intelligence.

This columnist, however, remembers her in an entirely different light. As a reporter then for Eggie Apostol's Mr. & Ms. Magazine, which was in the vanguard of the "mosquito press," I recall Palma as the nursemaid of the opposition in the twilight years of the Marcos regime. At that time, she and some senior politicians sought to strengthen the opposition by looking for the strongest candidate to pit against the dictator. It was then that I saw destiny intervene, leading me to believe, as I do now, that the presidency is written in the stars.

* * *

Late in 1985, during one of those interminable meetings in the search for a candidate, Palma suddenly became the object of former Sen. Salvador Laurel's ire as it became clear to him that she was pressing for Cory Aquino. Laurel momentarily lost his temper in front of other shocked leaders. Though later he apologized, the political harm was done. It was grist for the mosquito press.

I wrote the story for Mr. & Ms. and political cartoonist Jess Abrera illustrated it by portraying Palma as Little Red Riding Hood and Laurel as the big bad wolf in granny's clothes, ready to devour her. After that outburst, Laurel's political star began plummeting and in the end, he had to agree to run as vice president to Cory.

To this lady jurist, who retained a girlish charm despite the Olympian heights to which her career brought her, a well-deserved eternal rest.

* * *

Yesterday, an hour-long ceremony marked the official launch of the Philippine-Japan Friendship Year 2006 at the Department of Foreign Affairs, presided by Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo and Japanese Ambassador Ryuichiro Yamazaki. It was to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations between the two countries, which came just a little over a decade after World War II ended. To celebrate this milestone, GMA issued Proclamations 854 and 905, declaring July 23 as RP-Japan Friendship Day, and 2006 as RP-Japan Friendship Year. As a cultural sideshow, a very short Noh dance, titled "Okina," said to be one of the most esoteric and ritualistic of Noh dances and music, was performed by UP students who were taught by Noh Master Umewaka, with flute master Jiro Fujita providing the music. This was followed by two folk songs by the DFA Chorale.

The local community has noted that the Japanese Embassy has been very active in cultural presentations during the one year Yamazaki has been here. It should become more so this year which is RP-Japan Friendship Year. In fact, the season kicks off on Jan. 11 at the CCP when the famed traditional drum group, Wadaiko Yamato of Japan, composed of young performers, will play and interact with the Negros Drumbeaters. Admission is free.

* * *

I've written about the country's pride, 15-year-old violin and math prodigy Chino Gutierrez, who's currently on a high school and violin scholarship in Munich. Experts say this is the best time for his prodigious talents to be honed, when his fingers are still young and agile. But what he enjoys is only free tuition and his parents are in need of help in expensive Germany. The National Commission on Culture and the Arts gave them a total of 1,200 euros since 2003, and the father, Lamberto, earns 800 euros a month as a contractual computer worker in the Philippine Embassy. But this is not enough even for food and rent. Moreover, Chino's music upkeep is so expensive, e.g. one set of violin strings, which has to be replaced monthly, costs $48, while re-"hairing" the bow once every two months costs 120 euros. Perhaps some generous foundations could help. Contact Chino's grand-aunt Linda Sebastian at 3744345.

A media disaster

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

"A MEDIA DISASTER, TOO" IS HOW WILLIAM Dowd, associate editor of the Times Union newspaper in Albany, New York, describes the American media's coverage of the Sago mine disaster.

If you will recall, news organizations, including the biggest and most respected newspapers in the United States and major wire agencies, along with TV stations and cable news, reported that 12 of 13 miners trapped in a coal mine in West Virginia had been found alive. But three hours later, mine officials announced that in truth only one survivor had been rescued and that the others were dead. By the time the correction was issued, most American papers had already printed their early editions, and much of the nation had gone to bed thinking a miraculous rescue had been pulled off.

"Alive! Miners beat odds," USA Today blared in its headline. "They're Alive" proclaimed the Hartford Courant, while the Boston Herald announced a "Miner Miracle." Similar front-page stories ran in The New York Times, Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, and were carried by all the major broadcast networks.

Journalism is often described as "the first rough draft of history," writes Dowd, but in this instance, "rough turned out to be a horribly apt description for how the coal mine tragedy was covered."

The staff of the Newseum, which is devoted to studying the news media, reviewed the coverage of the tragedy and found that "slightly more than half of 250 US newspapers published front-page stories that the miners were alive," noting that "few stories raised doubts about the story's credibility, most did not make clear that the news was based on second-hand accounts from family members (and that there had been) no confirmations from company officials."

* * *

ANALYZING the American media's performance, National Public Radio's David Folkenflik, writing in the NPR's website, cites CNN reporter Anderson Cooper, who at first revealed the news with some cautionary overtones: "That is incredible news. Again, if this turns out to be true, we have not been able to independently confirm this, but the family members have been told that the 12 miners are alive."

But 15 minutes later, notes Folkenflik, "Cooper dropped the attributions and reported it as fact."

I happened to have my TV set tuned to CNN when this "happy" news was first announced, and, indeed, the coverage was relentlessly upbeat and celebratory. I distinctly remember a CNN female reporter interviewing the ecstatic wife of one of the miners, who was carrying her young daughter on her back. I can only hope that her husband was the sole survivor, but if not, my heart goes out to her for going through such a hellish roller-coaster of emotions.

CNN reported that the tolling of church bells was the first sign that good news was in the offing, and many of the news organizations claim they based their sources on interviews with rescue workers as well as Gov. Joe Manchin, who later denied having confirmed the news. Majority, though, relied on interviews with the miners' families.

Greg Mitchell, writing in the website of the trade journal Editor and Publisher, describes the media's performance as "disturbing and disgraceful," speculating that editors and reporters must have gotten "carried away" by this rare bit of good news they ignored possible flaws in the story, particularly the faulty sourcing.

* * *

WHY is the media's handling of the Sago mine disaster such an issue? The Public Eye, a blog of CBSNews.com, says the "hot debates" are about "the very soul of the news media—credibility."

A lot of newspaper editors interviewed in the wake of the "media disaster" felt they did all they could to mitigate the damage, and that they had based their stories "on available information at the time." By the time news that 12 of the miners had died had been confirmed, newspapers across the US had already finished with their print runs of the early editions. Some papers stopped the presses, destroyed copies with the erroneous headline and rushed new editions. Other editors chose to wait until the next day when they could publish a written apology and explain the process of the flawed coverage.

Jodi Shafer, a media critic of the online magazine Slate, says the media gaffes in the wake of the disaster "should underscore to readers that we in the media are fallible. Ours is a flawed business."

As we Pinoys might put it: "Sorry, *po. Tao lang po.*"

* * *

LOCAL journalists might find some comfort from this "disaster" involving the American media, but it also holds lessons for us.

The ability to mount 24/7 blanket coverage of breaking news has brought news coverage to a whole new level of excitement and immediacy. But it can also lead to new levels of recklessness and irresponsibility, especially when very little happens and on-the-spot reporters are under pressure to produce visually compelling news. Recall the coverage surrounding the kidnapping of Angelo dela Cruz in Iraq, and the relentless hounding his family and neighbors had to go through.

When news like the "successful rescue" of 12 miners for whom a media vigil had been mounted breaks, the race to milk it of all human interest is as much a consequence of boredom as of competitiveness. And in such a situation, journalists are likely to drop their guard, relaxing their vigilance and skepticism.

What the mine disaster coverage teaches us is that in a confusing situation where developments have yet to be independently and officially confirmed, a cautious reporter is vastly preferred to a gung-ho cheerleader.

When even a tabloid entertainment show like "The Insider" can run a critique of American mainstream media's performance, "serious" journalists should realize the time has come for major review and atonement.

The Mangyans of Mindoro

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

My dear friend, be welcome here/Where perchance did you come from?
From the seashore ebbing low/From the bubbling water springs?
If the water source up/Let us talk a moment here/In a happy friendly way.
Whoever you are/We like to be at your side.
—Ambahan No. 8

MANGUIANES, MANGYANES, MANGYANS, Malayan-Negrito people of Mindoro. The first written mention of the word "Manguianes" was in 1577 by Fray Martin de Rada. Nothing more appeared until 1630.

We are told by Augustinian Friar Juan de Medina that the island of Mindoro was accessible through Batangas (as it still is) and that it was very large and very well covered with mountains. It had beautiful rivers and lots of fish and, above all, it had a lot of wax that was mainly gathered by "the ancient inhabitants of the country...the people called Mangyan (forest people)." Although considered "savages," the friars regarded the Mangyans as "simple, honest, temperate people" who were afraid the Spaniards would capture them in order to have them man their boats. Thus, the wax they gathered was turned over to the "Tagals" who used it to pay their tribute.

The Mangyans were not exclusive to Mindoro but apparently also inhabited the interiors of Romblon and Tablas so that the name was collective and, at the time, referred to other communities. These groups were basically nomadic, did not appear to have any knowledge of agriculture or of money and roamed the forests in batches or by families. The men wore g-strings and the women 30 or 40 yards of rattan (*bejuco*) around their hips.

Oddly enough, the friars considered the Mangyans "savages," and there is no mention that these people had a system of writing believed to have originated in India 2,500 years ago. (How it got to the inhabitants of Mindoro is not known, which is probably why researchers believe each Mangyan tribe has a migration history of its own.) It has been established that the Buhid and Hanunoo Mangyan scripts are similar to Indonesian and Indian writing and related to modern day Sanskrit.

With this skill, the Mangyans wrote poetry. (Since these were inscribed in bamboo trees in the forest, they probably escaped the eyes of the friars.) The good news is that these poems are still being created, but the bad news is that only the older Mangyan generation continues the practice. The oldest reference to these poems called "*ambahan*" comes from a German anthropological publication dated 1895.

At present, there are only four surviving pre-Spanish systems of writing and one of them is that of the Hanunuo and Buhid Mangyans. There were 17 syllabaries existing in the Philippines in the 16th century. Today, four remain. Aside from the Buhid and the Hanunoo Mangyan scripts, there are the Pala'wan and Tagbanua scripts of Palawan. In 1999, these scripts were officially inscribed in the "Memory of the World" register of the Unesco.

Another skill is weaving, which is still done by the women of the Hanunoo Mangyan family, a skill they learn from their mothers after they marry. Once they used to plant, harvest, separate and dry, spin and then weave the cotton fibers. Today, the material is purchased and the intricate Hanunoo Mangyan design of *pakudos* is embroidered on it. It takes over a week to complete the embroidery. Only two colors are used to embroider *pakudos*. For a *pakudos* on a white shirt, it is predominantly red and highlighted by a fine black outline stitchery. Although the origin of the *pakudos* is uncertain, it is supposed to ward off evil spirits and also done for decorative purposes.

We are therefore lucky that Dr. Antoon Postma, over a period of more than 40 years, gathered the cultural data about the life and customs of the Mangyans inhabiting the southern portion of Mindoro Island. He collected folklore materials which have been published in a series of four books as well as documented their poetry.

We are also lucky that Lolita Fansler decided to take with her to Mindoro on her frequent trips there her then young son, Quint, who later became a Jesuit volunteer and lived among the Mangyans. Because of his acquaintance with Dr. Postma and his interest in them, there is now in Calapan the most extensive library anywhere of Mangyan writings and culture.

Now if you wish to purchase Dr. Postma's books and see the rich artifacts of Mangyan culture (their embroidery, baskets, poetry on bamboo), drop by the Ayala Museum any time this month. Keep in mind that they have a distinctive literary heritage of eloquence passed down to them by ancestors long forgotten, written in the Baybayin script and shared with other Southeast Asian cultures.

Even rain will stop some day/For rain doesn't own a house.
A storm will not last all the time/For a storm has no home like you.
Are you not a man?
Does not man always go back to his dwelling place, to his home,
To look at the face he wore long, long before he was born.—Ambahan No. 117

Everything is art

YOUNG BLOOD

Sherwin Altarez Mapanoo

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

WALANG PERA SA ARTS.

It's such an atrocious statement but true, nonetheless. To be an artist is to be a masochist. Artists, more often than not, don't get what they really deserve and endure an understated lifestyle. So, when I decided to pursue a degree in Art Studies for the sake of passion, I was prepared for the worst, including fewer job opportunities and a minimal salary.

Curse it. Landing a job that suits one's baccalaureate degree is extremely difficult these days. In fact, most of my batch mates have ended up working in call centers, business-process outsourcing, marketing companies and the like, holding jobs that are totally unrelated to what they have learned in college because of the much higher compensations they get.

It's a common knowledge that call center agents work in shifting cycles and therefore endure erratic sleep cycles. I cannot imagine how they manage to keep performing such a robotic and monotonous job after four years of acquiring "cultural capital" in the premier state university and being bombarded with jargon, aesthetic theories and art criticism. Jargon and communication, from whatever angle I look at it, do not blend together.

True, the present economic landscape is hardly ideal for graduates of art-related courses. The art market is so limited. To make things even worse, the perennial issue of unemployment and underemployment remain unsolved.

Last April, about 385,000 fresh graduates joined the labor market. Within the year, only 4 out of every 10 graduates were expected to land a job. Many of those who are able to find employment in the next two years will be working in call centers. In a report, the National Statistics Office said that the rate of joblessness rose to 11.3 percent in January last year. That means some 4.03 million Filipino adults were unemployed as of January 2005, up from 3.9 million a year earlier.

Amid the predicaments new graduates face today, I consider myself lucky enough to have landed a job as a writer in a government agency that systematizes national efforts toward the development, preservation and promotion of culture and the arts. It took me about three months—the most demoralizing and frustrating days of my life so far—to finally land a job.

Persistence, as they say, is the key to victory. Don't give up trying to do what you really want to do and you can never go wrong. And that's exactly what I did. I was set on starting a career in a cultural agency. I persisted and equipped myself with extreme patience.

I have always wanted to work in a cultural agency. For one thing, a job in a cultural office is relevant to the degree I took up in college and my advocacy as an art aficionado. I am also convinced that the Philippines has a more vigorous artistic community than any other Southeast Asian countries. Our country is a haven of talented painters, sculptors, muralists and folk artists. To be part of a cultural agency is to help promote our artistic and cultural legacies among the Filipino people and the rest of the world.

Second, I would like to challenge myself. To work in a government agency means dealing with a hierarchy and disputes. Literally and figuratively, one has to fight to assert one's moral, intellectual and political beliefs with the dominant class and the government. I believe that in order to be an agent of social change, one must get involved in changing the system and commit oneself to bringing about a revolutionary shift in government.

I think culture is a powerful catalyst for conscientizing and producing a shift in attitudes that would displace the values that breed the culture of graft and corruption, like greed and apathy. Cultural workers and artists help instill important cultural values, such as honesty, integrity, unity and sharing, among our people through their paintings and other works of art.

At the moment, I earn a meager salary that is just enough to support me in my masteral studies and buy my daily needs. But I have no regrets. Like other idealistic artists and writers, I look at it as a challenge, a symbolic representation of my role in society.

I believe that everyone is an artist in many symbolic ways. But instead of brushing paint on canvass or molding plaster of Paris to craft a sculpture, most of us create something good for our lives, for other people and for our country.

In a post-modern perspective, everything we do is art. Thus, to speak and debate upon the current political brouhaha is to make art. To fight for our rights is to make art. To study hard is to make art. To love our country is to make art. To persist work for positive social changes is to make art.

However, art has two important categories: good/high art and bad/low art. These two are totally different. The former creates something positive, idealistic, just and noble. The latter maintains a status quo that is corrupt, backward and unjust.

We have the choice of what to create and recreate.

Sherwin Altarez Mapanoo, 21, graduated with a degree in Art Studies (cum laude) from the University of the Philippines Diliman, where he was editor in chief of the Philippine Collegian in 2003-2004. He works as writer in the National Commission for Culture and the Arts.

THEY SAID

Niggardly response

"The measly allocation speaks well of how the government intends to respond to the collapsing public health care system."

—Dr. Gene Nisperos, Health Alliance for Democracy secretary general, on the national government's budget allocation for the Department of Health

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NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

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A dangerous pronouncement, a throwback to martial law

CHIEF JUSTICE ARTEMIO PANGANIBAN'S vow to steer the Supreme Court away from the "interventionist" policy of his predecessor and defer to the government the resolution of issues involving business and finance (PDI, 12/23/05) has drawn mixed reactions. There are those who view it as the Chief Justice's way of contributing to the creation of a positive investment climate for the country. Others see it as a dangerous pronouncement which could result to an abdication by the Supreme Court of its obligation to curb excesses in other departments of government.

We go for the second view. Our Constitution expressly vests judicial power in the Supreme Court and in lower courts. It defines judicial power as the duty to settle actual controversies involving rights under the law, and the determination of whether any branch or instrumentality of the government has acted with grave abuse of discretion and exceeded its jurisdiction.

The power of judicial review is an integral component of the delicate system of checks and balances, which is essential to the functioning of a republican government. It is a bedrock of our system; its absence or passive use could lead to authoritarianism or dictatorship.

It is worth bearing in mind that the provision on judicial power, categorically mandated by the 1987 Constitution, is a product of the country's experience during martial law—when the Marcos administration was able to freely enter into dubious contracts and schemes because the judiciary considered such act as "political" and refused to exercise its power of judicial review. The present Supreme Court should not shirk this duty.

Panganiban, just like former Chief Justice Hilario Davide, is known for having played a pivotal role in the installation of President Macapagal-Arroyo to power during Edsa II. The Davide court, however, was able to show to the country that its existence was not tied to the political fortunes of Ms Arroyo. It asserted its role as the final arbiter of whether an act by a government branch or instrumentality is within the bounds of existing laws or the Constitution.

There is no reason for the current Chief Justice to abandon the role that his predecessor had meticulously pursued. To do otherwise would be a throwback to the much-reviled days of martial law when the executive lorded it over other branches of government because the Supreme Court refused to exercise the power of judicial review. It could also validate the perception that Ms Arroyo was up to something when, for the first time since martial law, she discarded the seniority rule in the appointment of the Chief Justice.

—REMIGIO D. SALADERO JR.,
chair, Pro-Labor Legal Assistance Center,
33-B E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Quezon City

Abat's error

WHILE GEN. FORTUNATO ABAT should be admired for his perseverance and courage, he has made a grievous mistake in declaring a revolutionary transition government. He is not declaring independence against the Spaniards, the Americans, or the Japanese. He is asking us to revolt against our government, hardly the stuff that gains the respect and confidence of the global community.

Does General Abat think for one moment that in other civilized countries, a retired general and ambassador would be allowed to declare a revolutionary transition government and not be arrested? General Abat's patriotism and courage have been blurred by his emotions.

Let us focus our efforts on effecting change through an improved electoral process and making voters wiser in their choices. It can only be through such changes that we can hope to get better leaders and more effective government.

—NORRIE JACINTO,
Sunrise Drive, Sunny Hills,
Talamban, Cebu City

Nation orphaned by 'ingrata'

JUSTICE CECILIA MUÑOZ PALMA, A TRUE Filipino, is dead. We should all feel orphaned, a mother of the nation has just died. We owe a great part of our freedom directly from her. And our leading newspapers put the news of her death on Page 4 or 5 (the INQUIRER placed the article on Page 5).

What was the term used to call Justice Palma when during the darkest period of martial law she stood and spoke for all of us? Ingrata.

—L. JEROME C. GUEVARRA,
jerome.guevarra@gmail.com

We agree that we have been orphaned by this great Filipino lady. But this is what happened:

We learned of the news of the eminent Justice's death way past the deadline for the first edition. There was only space on Page 5 for the second edition but we made sure to place the announcement of her passing in the "Windows" on Page 1.

We have since made up for it by covering her wake for Page 1, and it will be so until she's laid to rest with all the accolades that she so richly deserves. **-Ed.**

Deliver the heads of corrupt high-ranking public officials

THIS IS IN REACTION TO CHRISTINE Avendaño's news report, headlined "Believe it or not, BIR makes it to anti-graft body honor roll." (PDI, 12/21/05) Let us put things in their proper perspective.

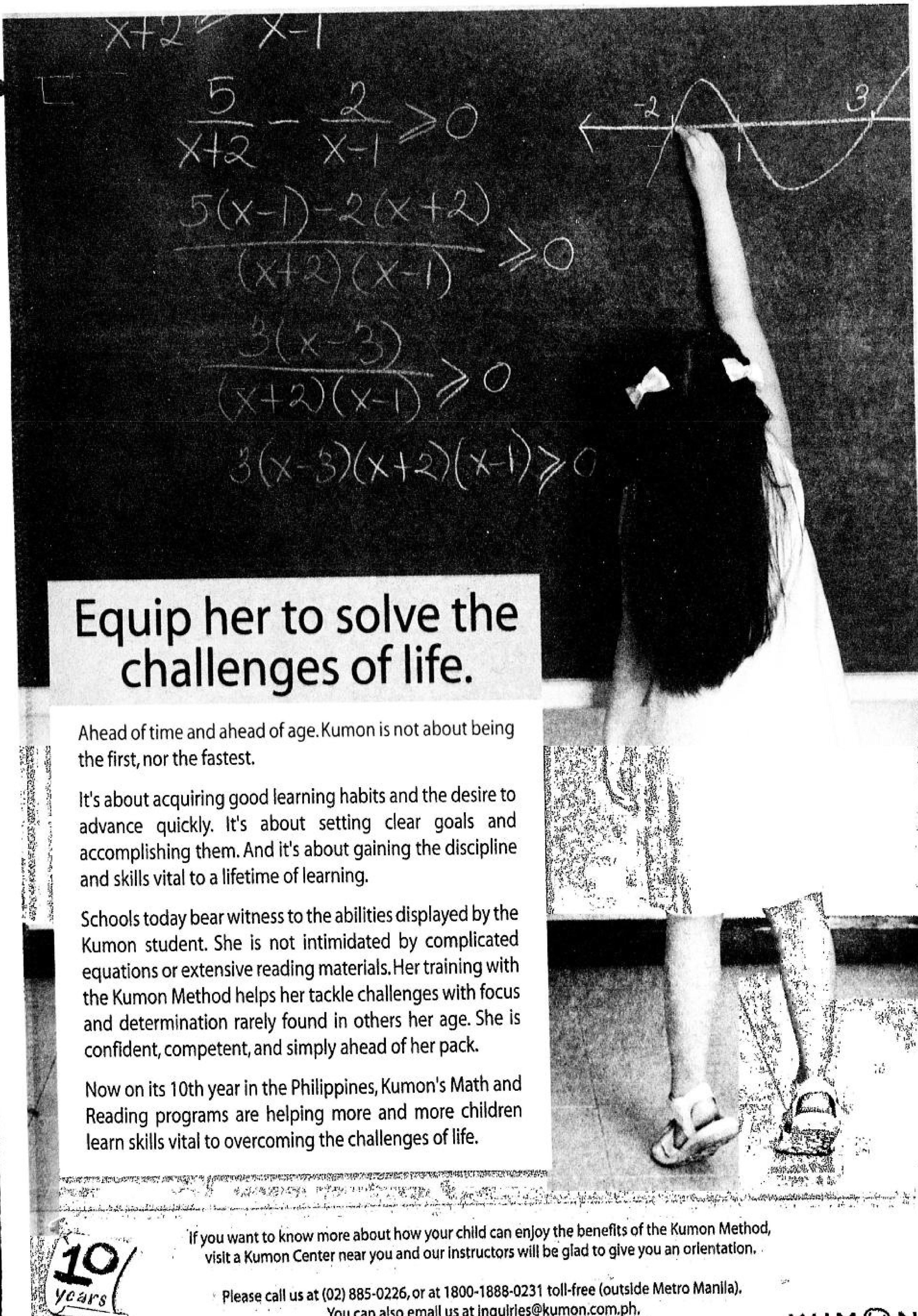
Firstly, there should be no doubt that the public fully appreciates the efforts being exerted by the present leadership of the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission to stop corruption. There may exist an excellent anti-corruption program, but it will only be good on paper if corruption goes unabated and the corrupt, especially if they're Cabinet officials, are not indicted and prosecuted. (Such a program just calls to mind an IMF official's statement praising Filipino technocrats for being good in economic planning, yet our economy continues to deteriorate.)

And President Macapagal-Arroyo has yet to show the world that she really means business when it comes to corruption. She has to act swiftly and decisively and make sure an anti-corruption campaign results in conviction and punishment, even as it observes due process. Time is running out on her. The Philippines is now considered the third most corrupt country in the world.

Secondly, the public would want to see in place a strong program to ensure that corruption cases are investigated and prosecuted to their proper, just and final closure.

And finally, the only way to erase the general perception that corruption in government goes unabated is for Ms Arroyo to deliver to the public the heads of corrupt public officials in high positions. People are now losing their patience and crying for blood.

—ERNESTO T. CABARDO, Purok 3,
Zone 6, Barangay Cupang, Antipolo City



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Sacrificing short-term gains for the long term

I'M A SPORT ENTHUSIAST, AND I'M DISturbed by the current paralysis preventing the formation of a more competitive national basketball team.

In sacrificing short-term gains by scrapping basketball in the recently concluded Southeast Asian Games ably hosted and convincingly won by the Philippines, the Philippine Olympics Committee may have pushed the right buttons toward regaining respectability for Philippine basketball in international competitions.

Had the POC "reinstated" the Basketball Association of the Philippines (BAP) as the National Sports Association (NSA) for basketball, we could have successfully defended our SEA Games basketball title, alright. But unless genuine reforms in Philippine basketball are instituted, the Philippine basketball teams will again fail miserably in the more prestigious Asian Basketball Conference and in other Asian tournaments.

For so long, the BAP has been entrusted with the task of organizing basketball teams for international competitions. Time and again, it has proven that it is not up to the task. With BAP at the helm of Philippine basketball, its standing in international caging has steadily declined: from a lofty position as Asia's top basketball superpower back in the 1950s, Philippine basketball is now wallowing in mediocrity.

Let's hope that the successful staging of the recent SEA Games and the outstanding performance of the Filipino athletes will finally convince FIBA that the POC has the capability and the savvy to propel the Philippines back to its rightful place in the world of basketball, or at least in Asian basketball, and drop its recognition of the underperforming BAP.

—FELIX C. REIS,
44 Barlin St., San Roque,
Baao, Camarines Sur

Bagong Pinoy

GREETINGS FROM ANG BAGONG PINOY Movement! We are proud that a lot of opinion writers have been writing about lawyer Alexander Lacson, author of that very slim but powerful book about "The 12 Little Things That The Filipino Can Do For His Country." The author is with us in our Bagong Pinoy Movement which started as just a yahoo group for Filipinos based here and abroad, but eventually adopted the cause of good citizenship. In six months' time our group has grown to 1,300 plus. We are excited that we can reach so many homes and families and promote good citizenship especially with the help of Lacson's book. No Filipino can say "Down with this government!" without really doing something for his country. Every Filipino should read and reflect on this book to help build a better Philippines.

More power to this already powerful newspaper!

—Babes Quiambao,
ANG BAGONG PINOY MOVEMENT,
15 San Isidro Cabuyao Laguna

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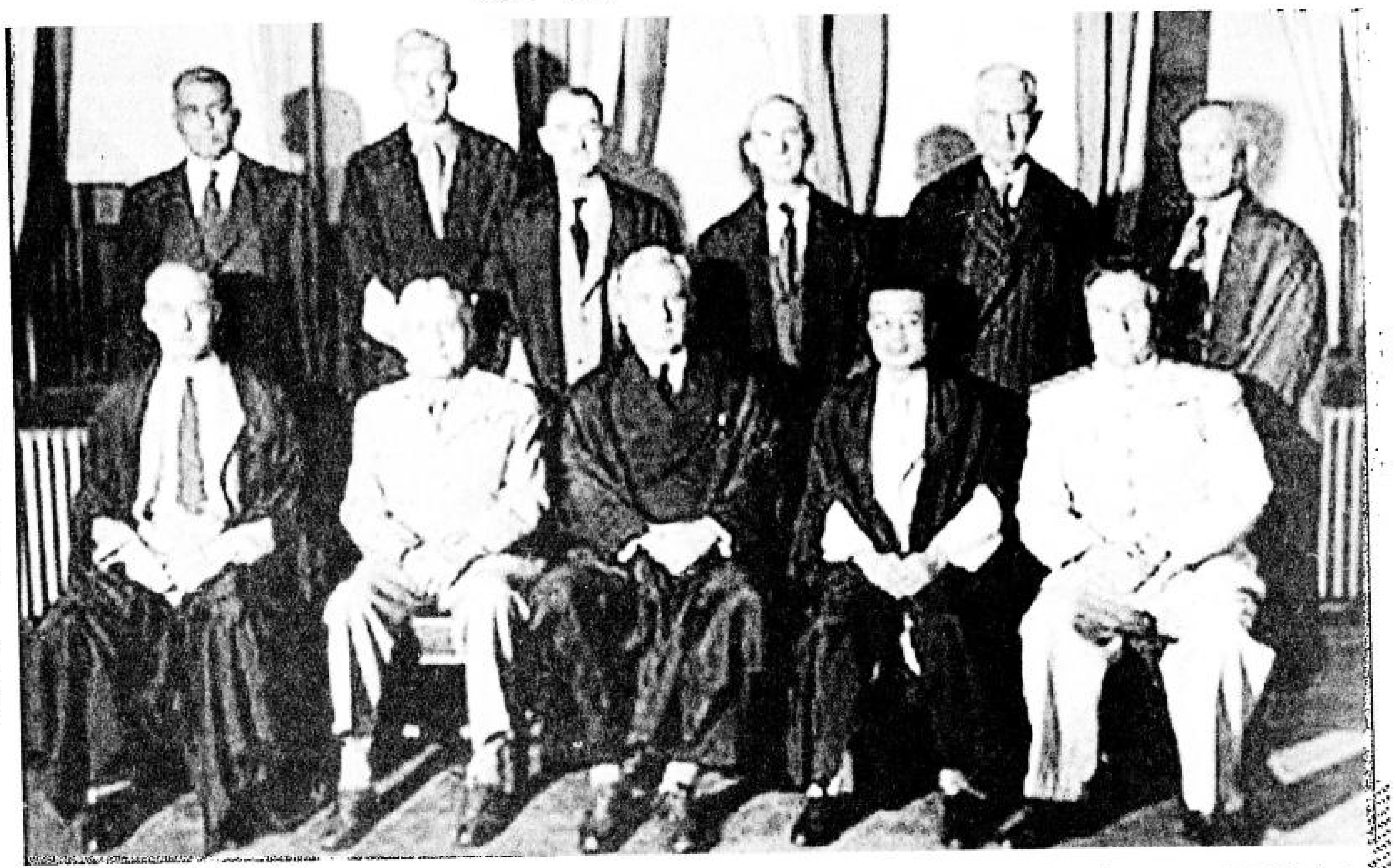
The Filipinos' unsung peacemaker

By Raj Padilla
Iloilo City

EXCEPT FOR A FOUNTAIN PEN REGALLY DISplayed at the Museo de Iloilo in Iloilo City, nothing more in the present day can ever be associated with the man who helped write off Japanese dominion in the whole of Asia and the Pacific during World War II.



THE JUDGES. Back Row (from left): Radhabinod Pal of India, B.V.A. Roling of the Netherlands, Edward McDougall of Canada, Henri Bernard of France, Harvey Northcroft of New Zealand, and Delfin Jaranilla. Front Row (from left): Lord Patrick of the United Kingdom, Maj. Gen. Cramer of the United States, Sir William Webb of Australia, Mei Ju-ao of China, and I.M. Zarayanov of the Soviet Union.

SOURCE: UNITED STATES NATIONAL ARCHIVES

DELFIN Jaranilla

SOURCE: PHILIPPINE SUPREME COURT

History has literally forgotten about Delfin Jaranilla—his stern but scholarly and compassionate looks, his noteworthy stint in public service, and his all-important role during the war.

Jaranilla rose to prominence when on Jan. 19, 1946, while serving as associate justice of the Supreme Court, he was named by President Manuel Roxas as the only Philippine delegate to the International Military Tribunal for the Far East, better known as the Tokyo War Crimes Tribunal. While it was the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal that tried and later sentenced to death or long years in prison Nazi perpetrators of the war, it was the 11-member Tokyo court that dealt with their Japanese counterparts.

Potsdam Declaration

Gen. Douglas MacArthur, supreme commander for the Allied Powers, created the Tokyo tribunal in compliance with the Allies' Potsdam Conference Declaration in Germany on July 26, 1945, which stated: "We do not intend that the Japanese shall be enslaved as a race or destroyed as a nation, but stern justice shall be meted out to all war criminals, including those who have visited cruelties upon our prisoners."

Aside from Jaranilla, 10 top jurists from 10 countries composed the Tokyo court—Sir William Webb of Australia, Edward McDougall of Canada, Mei Ju-ao of China, Henri Bernard of France, Radhabinod Pal of India, B.V.A. Roling of the Netherlands, Harvey Northcroft of New Zealand, Lord Patrick of the United Kingdom, John Higgins of the United States (replaced by Maj. Gen. Cramer) and I.M. Zarayanov of the then Soviet Union.

Almost three years after it convened on April 29, 1946, the court released its verdict crafted from the testimonies of 419 witnesses and over 4,000 exhibits of evidence.

Charged with "conventional war crimes" to "crimes against peace" to "crimes against humanity," the defendants were either meted out the death penalty or life sentence.

Seven were sentenced to death, including Hideki Tojo, who was Japan's prime minister and minister of the army from October 1941 to 1944. Among others, Tojo ordered the attack of the US naval base in Pearl Harbor.

Sixteen received life sentences.

Aside from Tojo, three of the accused were former premiers. Four were former war ministers, two were former Navy ministers, and six were former generals.

A man of peace

Marcelino Padilla Jr., a nephew of Jaranilla, said it was a big disappointment why history books did not carry much account of Jaranilla's life and writings.

Padilla, a retired public school teacher, said the late Supreme Court justice was not only a soldier, lawyer and public servant but also a man of music (violinist) and sports (a bicycle racer in his youth, a prolific golfer, a brilliant chess player, and an expert marksman).

"Tay Delfin is worthy of a particular place in history and should be committed to memory by the Ilonggos. His valor was uncommon, intellect defined, and public service career exemplary. He did the Ilonggo nation proud before an international community who valued peace and deeply abhorred the cruelty of war," he said.

In living through the meanness of war, he emerged as a man of peace, Padilla said.

He hoped that Jaranilla would be accorded his rightful place in history as his family quietly marked his 122nd birth anniversary last Christmas Eve.

'Pensionado'

Born to Antonio Jaranilla, a farmer and fishpond owner, and Juana Jebucion in Jereos, La Paz, Iloilo City on Dec. 24, 1883, Delfin topped the *pensionado* examinations in Iloilo in 1903, which entitled him to a scholarship at the Sta. Ana High School in Orange County, California.

He earned his Bachelors of Laws degree from the Jesuit-run Georgetown University, also in the US, in 1907. He spent his university years with Cebuano Jose Ma. Cuenco, who majored in Canon Law. Cuenco would in time serve as archbishop of Jaro.

After graduation, Jaranilla returned to the Philippines to serve the government in various capacities—as a law clerk, clerk of court, fiscal (prosecutor) and judge. He eventually became secretary of justice and associate justice of the Supreme Court in 1945. When the war broke out, President Manuel L. Quezon named him chief of the Armed Forces' Judge Advocate General's Office.

Jaranilla married Angela Hipolito Salazar, a graduate of the Iloilo Normal School. They had four children—Delfin Jr., Antonio, Rosa and Emma. Angela died in 1937.

Though he took an active part in the proceedings, it was said that Jaranilla did not fully agree with the Tokyo verdict (which he signed with the fountain pen now deposited at the Museo de Iloilo).

Historians would later qualify Jaranilla's remarks as coming from a man who "had suffered personal injury and loss at the hands of the Japanese."

A legal hard-liner

After the verdict came out, Jaranilla was quoted to have described it as "too lenient, not exemplary and deterrent, and not commensurate with the gravity of the offense or offenses committed."

Jaranilla, serving then as an Army full colonel, was one of the few who survived the infamous Bataan Death March, which took thousands of Filipino and American lives.

"He hobbled the whole length of the Death March with the aid of a stout cane and on the shoulder of his son Delfin Jr., who was a young lieutenant then," said Ana C. Gonzaga in an article she wrote for the Air Command newspaper in 1980.

As prisoners of war, they were beaten arbitrarily and shorn of food and water for days. Those who no longer had the strength to carry on were executed by being shot, beheaded or bayoneted.

It was during detention at the concentration camp in Capas, Tarlac when he developed an intimate relationship with his second cousin, Sofia Hechanova, who he eventually married.

"... he almost died from illness and malnutrition, were if not for the tender care of Sofia J. Hechanova, chief nurse of Pampanga General Hospital who was able to visit and give him medicines in Capas," Gonzaga wrote.

After the war, President Sergio Osmeña named Jaranilla justice secretary and when the department became a smoothly running entity, appointed him senior associate justice of the Supreme Court.

As a member of the bench, Gonzaga said Jaranilla called the legal profession "one of the most exalted in the ambition of intellectual men."

"As a judge, he demanded that rain or shine, the trials must be punctual. He fined lawyers and witnesses for tardiness and heard cases far into the night ... [also] To him, honesty is a virtue that must be intertwined with the practice of law. One who loses his case honestly is better than a counsel who wins dishonestly. The law is the law, he said, and to interpret it on the side of human frailty is to render injustice to one who seeks justice and redress," Gonzaga said.

Doctor of Laws

After the Tokyo trial, Gonzaga said Jaranilla returned to Georgetown University to reap yet another laurel, a Doctor of Laws degree *honoris causa*, "because of his distinguished career as a jurist and his loyalty to the cause of freedom and justice, and has gained the respect and admiration of the peoples of all countries."

Upon his return to the country, Jaranilla decided to retire for good and spend his last years with his family.

He died in 1980, at the age of 96, capping a life lived to its fullest—for the country and race he had loved so dearly.

THE DEFENDANTS. High-ranking Japanese officials in one of the rare shots taken during the Tokyo trial.

SOURCE: UNITED STATES NATIONAL ARCHIVES

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‘Jueteng’ back in Batangas, elsewhere

CALAMBA CITY—“JUETENG” IS back.

INQUIRER sources said the illegal numbers game was revived in Batangas, whose governor, Armand Sanchez, had been mentioned in a Senate hearing as one of the country’s biggest gambling lords. Sanchez has denied involvement in jueteng.

The Senate ceased its investigation of jueteng without inviting Sanchez.

The illegal numbers racket also returned in other areas.

Cavite Vice Gov. Johnvic Remulla said jueteng returned to at least five towns in his province, quoting reports from village officials.

Remulla identified a certain Gani Kupkupin as the maintainer of jueteng in Cavite. Kupkupin, Remulla said, coordinates Cavite jueteng operations with leaders of a national gambling syndicate.

In Laguna, a certain Boy Royo was reported to have taken over jueteng operations from a certain Totoy Haruta.

Remulla said he would write a letter to Senior Supt. Benjardi Mantele, Cavite police chief, and Gov. Erineo “Ayong” Maliksi on the resumption of jueteng.

But Mantele insists Cavite is still jueteng free. Police in the province, however, said draws are being done in Talisay, Batangas.

Maliksi said he would not tolerate jueteng.

“If indeed (Remulla) will write me, I am willing to extend whatever help I can to stop the return of jueteng,” Maliksi said.

Batangas Vice Gov. Ricky Recto earlier said jueteng continued in the province, although it was next to impossible to find a paper trail that would lead the illegal gambling operations to Sanchez.

Recto said if ever any piece of evidence would be produced against the governor, it would be on tax evasion and failure to declare assets and liabilities for pieces of property that are in the governor’s name.

Sanchez had dismissed Recto’s statements as politicking.

Marlon Mendoza, an Army officer on floating status and former bodyguard of ex-election officer Virgilio Garcillano, had executed a sworn statement saying that Sanchez met several times with Garcillano in Batangas and a girlie bar in Parañaque.

During those meetings, according to Mendoza, Sanchez gave money from jueteng to Garcillano as a payoff for Sanchez’s victory in the race for governor of Batangas. Sanchez and Garcillano had denied Mendoza’s allegation.

In a village in this city, a bet collector said jueteng has indeed returned, but said it served a good purpose because it helped tide over poor families during the holidays.

“I hope it (jueteng) continues,” said the collector.

A Calabarzon police officer said jueteng draws are held twice a day in four Laguna districts and in Batangas.

The police officer said draws started being held in the third week of November. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

Van hijacked

BACOLOD CITY—Seven armed men hijacked a delivery van in Pontevedra town last week and escaped with nearly P1 million in collection money. Armed men in bonnets surrounded the van and one of them fired at the vehicle, said Pontevedra police chief Insp. Mary Rose Salve Gaspillo.

Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

Ex-solon donates

FORMER congressman Mark Jimenez will donate a total of P5 million to be used in purchasing badly needed relief goods for the victims of flooding in Calapan, Oriental Mindoro. In a press statement, Jimenez said he handed yesterday P1 million to local officials of Calapan and the Guardians for the relief operation to be started today with the help of the members of the religious organization he established, the Nagkakaisa sa Diyos (One in God).

Whale shark found dead

BACOLOD CITY—A whale shark was found dead and floating about 100 meters from the shore of the Montenegro Lines at the Bacolod Reclamation area last week. The whale shark, an endangered marine species locally known as “biliran,” was about three meters long and weighed more than 300 kilograms, said Emmanuel Lobrido, acting chief of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources. Fisherman Federico Losaoro, 42, said he was lifting ship floaters when he saw the whale shark floating with its white belly up Dec. 29.

Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

School exec transfer

BACOLOD CITY—Negros Occidental Schools Division Superintendent Emolyn Corteza has asked the Department of Education to assign her to another division following a recent stroke. Gov. Joseph Marañon announced Dec. 22 that he had asked acting Education Secretary Fe Hidalgo to replace Corteza because she was no longer physically fit to do her job.

Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

Kids get iron-rich rice

LEGAZPI CITY—At least 6,337 pre-elementary to Grade 1 malnourished pupils in the Bicol region have been receiving a kilo of iron-fortified rice each during school days since the second week of December as part of the “Food for School” program of the Department of Education and the National Food Authority.

2nd meningo victim in Davao dies

DAVAO CITY—A 26-YEAR-OLD WOMAN became the second casualty of meningococcemia here this month.

Dr. Josephine Villafuerte, chief of the Davao City Health Office, said the victim, who was first confined at the Davao Doctors Hospital, died on Wednesday evening.

“Her remains were immediately cremated,” Villafuerte said.

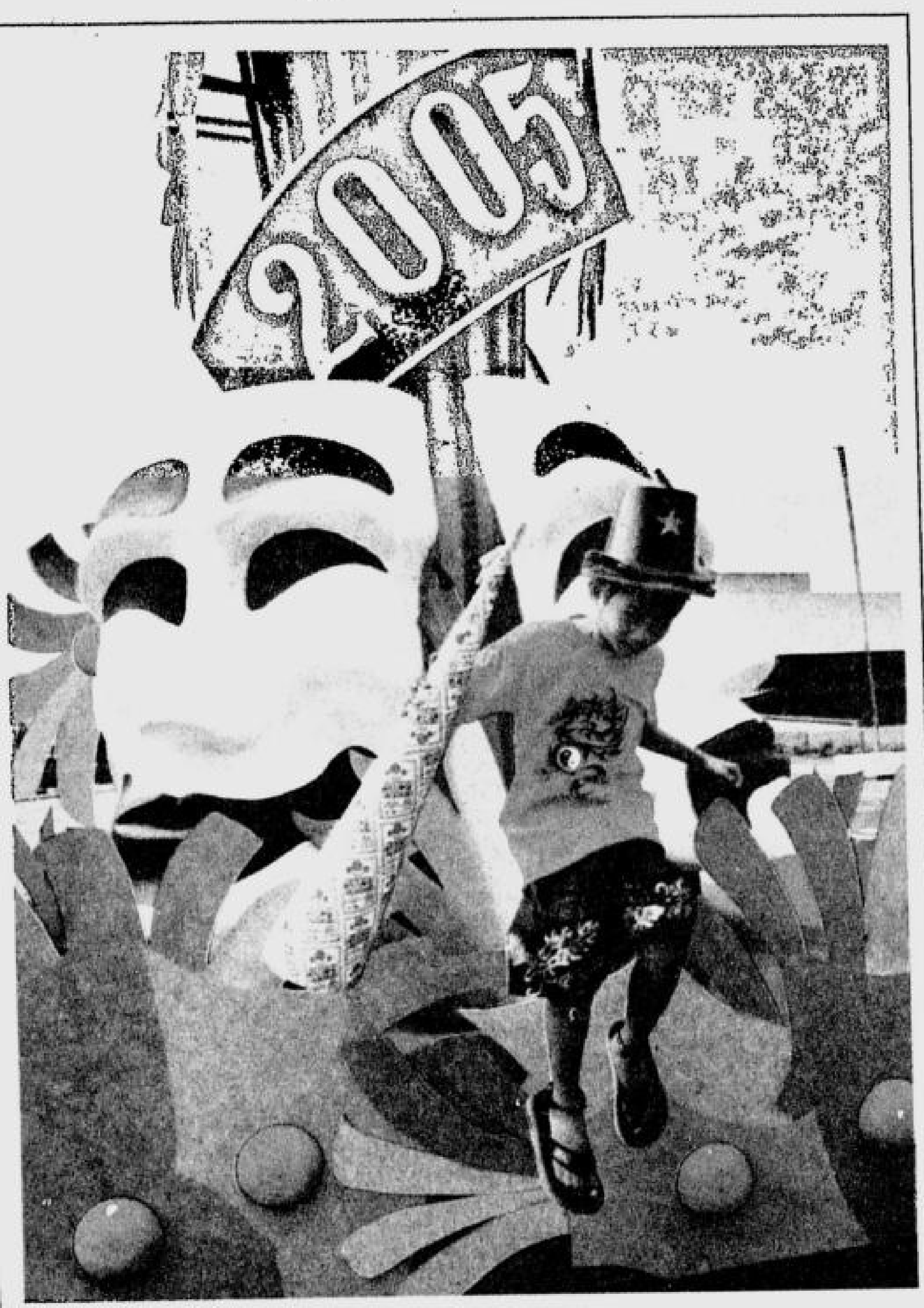
On Jan. 2, a boy also died of the disease.

Last year, at least seven meningo cases were recorded in the city with four deaths.

Villafuerte said antibiotics had been given to the family of the latest victim and that their house had been quarantined.

In North Cotabato, at least two Manobo lumad died while 20 others were hospitalized after a diarrhea outbreak in two far-flung villages of Magpet town.

Dr. Ted Calica, Magpet health chief, said they traced the outbreak in the villages of Kinarum and Manobo to a contaminated water source. *Dennis Jay C. Santos and Jeoffrey Maitem, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



NEW YEAR DECOR PAT ROQUE/AP
A boy jumps off from a recently used props on the eve of the celebration of New Year, Dec. 31, in Manila, as his parents sell different items used in greeting the New Year.

CARP to cover Buscayno co-op land

TARLAC CITY—THE GOVERNMENT IS preparing to buy a five-hectare lot here that is part of a property irregularly acquired by defunct cooperatives of former New People’s Army founder and commander Bernabe Buscayno.

The valuation or pricing of the lot in Barangay Balanti here by the Land Bank of the Philippines is expected to start this month after the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology certified it as lahar-free in December, documents showed.

The planned valuation came almost a year after former Agrarian Reform Secretary Rene Villa affirmed on Feb. 22, 2005 the Oct. 2, 2002 order by former Department of Agrarian Reform regional director Renato Herrera to place the land under the coverage of the CARP.

It was former Agrarian Reform Secretary Hernani Braganza who ordered an investigation after the INQUIRER, in a three-part special report, exposed procedural lapses, if not anomalies, in the acquisition, registration and titling of the two pieces of property, totaling 100 hectares, in Barangays Balanti and Armenia by Buscayno’s People’s Livelihood Foundation Inc. and the Tarlac Integrated Livelihood Cooperative. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Camiguin governor draws fire over curfew

LABO NAMAN NYAN, POPSIE!

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—CRITICISM is mounting against the administration of Camiguin Gov. Pedro Romualdo for implementing a curfew in the province.

Even Romualdo’s son, Efigenio, has been openly opposing the curfew.

Efigenio, mayor of Mambajao town, even came to the rescue of those who were caught violating the curfew ordinance, which the provincial government has imposed over the island-province.

Residents said the implementation of the curfew is so stiff that it appears Camiguin is under martial law.

Some of them told the INQUIRER that the police would arrest anybody staying out late, including those attending the wake of dead relatives.

Romualdo denied the claims saying he goes out on patrol himself.

“If they attend a wake or on an emergency case, they are not arrested,” he said.

Beverly Selim-Musni, of the human rights group Karapatan said, curfews have widespread effects on fundamental freedoms like the freedom of movement and of expression and the guaranteed presumption of innocence.

“Curfew hours are associated with totalitarian regimes like Marcos during martial law, the Japanese invaders, Spanish and American colonizers and Hitler,” she said.

“While the intention of the LGU concerned may be sincere, it will not curb or deter criminality. It is still the effective enforcement of laws and the serious prosecution of offenders that will deter crimes,” Musni said.

Romualdo said the imposition of the 10 p.m. to 4 a.m. curfew in the entire island since November has reduced prostitution. *Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

N. Vizcaya execs say ‘jueteng’ tough nut

BAYOMBONG, NUEVA Vizcaya—A losing fight.

This was how mayors in Nueva Vizcaya described their campaign against the illegal numbers game “jueteng,” which has returned to at least four towns after it was stopped in September.

Bambang Mayor Pepito Balgos, president of the League of Municipalities in the province, said jueteng returned after the Small Town Lottery, which the government was using as a legal alternative to jueteng, failed to take off.

On Friday, jueteng bet collectors continued to make the rounds in four towns in Nueva Vizcaya for draws that were being held thrice a day, according to a *cabo* (head bet collector) who asked not to be named.

Jueteng operations were revived here on Dec. 17, 2005, allegedly with the consent of local officials, after more than two months of stoppage.

But in separate interviews on Friday, Mayor Santiago Dickson of Solano, and Mayor Nestor Sevillena of Bagabag said they have yet to confirm the presence of jueteng in their towns. Mayor John Severino Bagasao of Bayombong could not be reached for comment.

The mayors, however, admitted that bet collections may have been conducted discreetly or at the outskirts of the town proper.

Balgos, a member of the LMP national directorate, said their group has worked for the establishment of the STL or Loterya ng Bayan to stop jueteng.

He said it was intended to capture the patrons of jueteng while revenues will be shared among host local government units. *Melvin Gascon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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Cell phones as swap for info on jailbirds

By Margaux C. Ortiz and Leila B. Salaverria

SEVEN FOREIGN INMATES WHO provided information to the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) on the escape of three Bureau of Immigration (BI) detainees last month only want their cell phones and television sets back.

"They said their cell phones were their only means to contact their families," NBI Special Task Force chief Regional Director Reynaldo Esmeralda said.

But whether or not the request would be granted would depend on the Department of Justice (DOJ) secretary.

"They volunteered.the information regarding the escape. This does not mean their request would be automatically granted," Esmeralda said.

Surprise visit

The NBI, with Senior State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco and State Prosecutor Peter Ong, conducted a surprise inspection of the BI Detention Center in Bicutan, Taguig yesterday morning.

Esmeralda said his team seized hundreds of bladed weapons, 10 TV sets, 12 cell phones and a satellite receiver from 108 foreign inmates.

The NBI invited for questioning American Joseph Brockway, Belgian Saeren Lucas, Indian Penkej Kumar, Singaporean William Chee, and Bahrain national Abdulredha Ghuloom Asad Jaafar, all charged with overstaying.

The bureau also invited Chinese nationals Ong Zhi Shen or Jacky Ong and Co Ching Ki or Chay Ong, both facing drug-related cases.

Esmeralda said the detainees wrote Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez that they could provide vital information on the December 19 escape of Sri Lankan national Jayamaha Mudalege Don Keerthi Jamayaha or "Keerthi," and Chinese suspects Tan Tin Shao and Go Sak Ping.

Gonzalez suspected a connivance between BI authorities and the escaped detainees.

The seven detainees who volunteered information on the escape claimed jail guards assisted Keerthi, Tan and Go pass through the gate.

"They said they heard a gate opening and dogs barking when the Sri Lankan and the two other Chinese suspects escaped," Esmeralda said.

He agreed with the detainees that Keerthi, a big man, could not have escaped through a narrow opening, as jail guards claimed.

"The guards said Keerthi sawed off part of the prison bars and escaped through the small opening," Esmeralda said.

Esmeralda earlier said Keerthi was charged before the Office of the Ombudsman in connection with the illegal deportation of Chinese kidnap suspect Zhang Du.

The NBI also charged a top immigration official and eight others for allegedly facilitating Zhang's escape last May. Zhang left the country in May despite a pending kidnap for ransom case.

The suspect was arrested in connection with the kidnap of businesswoman Jackie Tiu in San Fernando City, La Union in 2001.

Gonzalez said that based on the new witnesses' statements, higher authorities seemed to have had a hand in the escape of Keerthi, Tan and Go.

Not big enough

One of the witnesses said he tried to get out of the window that the escapees used, but could barely squeeze in, although he was much smaller than Keerthi.

Senior State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco, who heads a DOJ fact-finding committee investigating the incident, said the body had recommended prohibiting the use of cell phones by BI detainees. But the inmates said they needed the phones to call their lawyers and families.

Gonzalez said he would instead consider installing a call center at the BI detention facility.

CRISTINA Bugayong (center) finds herself in the limelight after returning P300,000 in cash and checks to a messenger who had accidentally dropped the money as he was riding a motorcycle.

JOAN BONDOC

Honest girl reaps rewards

By DJ Yap and Alcuin Papa

FOR HER HONESTY, 12-YEAR-OLD CRISTINA Bugayong, a poor girl who returned P300,000 that a messenger lost, is reaping blessings far and wide.

The sixth-grader from Tomas Morato Elementary School will receive a computer set from Techpoint Computer Corp., owner of the cash and checks the girl found Wednesday night.

STI College also awarded Bugayong a two-year college scholarship. The Quezon City government, through Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr., is giving her a plaque of recognition and offering educational assistance. The National Union of Bank Employees (NUBE) is also setting up a special fund to help the girl and her family.

Quezon City councilor Ariel Inton, majority floor leader, also gave her P5,000.

Bugayong found the cash and checks amounting to P300,000 dropped by messenger Lito Mora on T. Gener Street on Barangay Kamuning as he drove past the girl on his motorcycle.

Mora, who also works as a technician at Techpoint, was supposed to deposit the money the next day. The cash amounted to about P140,000, while the checks were worth P160,000, he said.

Restituto Bundoc, public affairs chief of STI College, said Bugayong deserved the scholarship for providing a good example to children her age. He added the school was also offering Cristina a high school scholarship if its Quezon Avenue campus gets a permit from the education department. NUBE's finance officer Vivian Fajardo added that their president, Jose Umali, Jr., was so touched by Bugayong's story he felt they should help her family.

Meanwhile, the Department of Education (DepEd) said it wanted to make Bugayong a model for other students and adults. Fe Hidalgo said the DepEd was giving Bugayong a plague of recognition and also a year's worth of school supplies.

Judge bows out of Plinky Recto case

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURT JUDGE HANdling the domestic abuse case fitness expert Plinky Recto had filed against her former boyfriend yesterday inhibited himself from trying the case.

The decision surprised Recto and her lawyers, who showed up for the scheduled hearing yesterday morning in Mandaluyong City to file another round of pleadings against the father of her one-year-old son who is now in his custody. Recto had accused her former lover of abducting the boy.

"His (Recto's ex) reason was flimsy" Recto's lawyer Viriato Dupaya told the INQUIRER. He said Judge Esteban Tacla of the Mandaluyong City RTC Branch 208 cited "incompetence" in handling family cases as reason from inhibiting himself from the case. But Dupaya told reporters the judge "could have been harassed to inhibit himself."

Recto's former lover, a wealthy lawyer from Negros Occidental, had filed a motion asking the judge to inhibit from the case.

Sought for comment yesterday, he said the judge was really under pressure, but not from him. He said it was Recto's friends who could be pressuring the judge. "The good judge could have resented that pressure," he told the INQUIRER. This is the second time the judge handling Recto's case decided to inhibit. Mandaluyong City RTC Branch 209 Judge Adelaida Reyes also inhibited herself from the case last year. That time, it was Recto's camp which filed the motion asking her to inhibit.

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METROBRIEFS

Man found dead in fountain

A LEISURELY morning walk ended in shock for a mother and her daughter when they saw the body of a man floating in a Marikina City fountain yesterday morning. Authorities fished out the body of Pedro Toledo, a construction worker in Cainta, Rizal, from the three-foot deep fountain at the newly inaugurated Marikina Cityhood Park on Sumulong Highway about 8 a.m. yesterday. City Police chief Senior Supt. Manuel Gaerlan said the victim, who was reportedly psychologically unstable because of personal problems, told his family he would just go out for a walk. Investigator PO2 Bueneres Cruz Jr. told the INQUIRER the victim was already dead for six hours when he was found. Police theorized the victim could have suffered a heart or an asthma attack, accidentally fell into the fountain, and drowned. *Edson C. Tandoc Jr.*

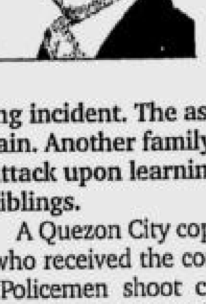
Safe for Quiapo fiesta

TO ASSIST thousands of devotees during the feast of the Black Nazarene in Quiapo on Monday, the Manila Police District will set up special centers at four vital spots in the area. MPD Station 5 commander Supt. Romulo Sapitula said police assistance centers would be put up at the corner of Palanca and P. Gomez streets, Gunao and Globo de Oro streets, Plaza del Carmen, and at the corner of Hidalgo Street and Quezon Boulevard. "We will also have a police advance command post in a building overseeing Plaza Miranda and Quiapo Church," Sapitula told the INQUIRER. A total of 250 police officers would also be deployed in the area, apart from 250 barangay watchmen and 350 volunteers made up of firemen, paramedics, and crime watch groups. That's not all. Five ambulances, four fire trucks, five mobile cars, a rescue van, two Explosives and Ordnance Division (EOD) teams, two K-9 units, and two Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) teams would also be sent out by the police to patrol the area. *Margaux C Ortiz.*

Honesty a rare virtue here

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo



A POOR GIRL HAS BEcome a celebrity after she returned P300,000 that she found in the street. In Japan, that type of honesty is no big deal.

But in the Philippines, returning money found in the streets, at the airport toilet, or in a cab is big news. Why? Because honesty seems to be a rare virtue in this country.

* * *

This is not to belittle the honesty of Cristina Bugayong, 12, who lives with her parents in a makeshift dwelling in Quezon City. In fact, her honesty is worth praising because her family needs the money, but did not touch it. The girl works in the school cafeteria in her spare time. Cristina's honesty is doubly praiseworthy because she returned the money against the advice of neighbors.

Her mother Luzviminda said there was no way they could have kept the money because she believed in karma. If we have more people like the Bugayongs, all is not lost.

* * *

The Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) says that there were fewer crimes last year than in 2004. But Pulse Asia put a damper on the boast. The survey firm said many victims didn't complain to police.

Why should they, when nothing happens?

Some policemen at the complaints desk show disinterest or no sympathy to aggrieved citizens. Look what happened to the Jimeno family which lost two of its members in a Christmas Day shooting incident. The assailant was a police captain. Another family member died of a heart attack upon learning of the death of his two siblings.

A Quezon City cop, SPO3 Bartolome Lazaro, who received the complaint, told the Jimenos: "Policemen shoot civilians because they are sometimes provoked." So why should one go to the police for redress when people like Lazaro handle the complaints?

* * *

Anti-jueteng crusader Archbishop Oscar Cruz reports that the underground lottery resumed in Bicol during the holidays. Why single out the Bicol region? Jueteng was also allowed to operate in Laguna, Quezon and Angeles City. Without the knowledge of top civil and police officials in those places, jueteng would not have operated with impunity.

Anti-jueteng czar Edward Hagedorn himself admitted that the illegal numbers game could not be stopped. Why not legalize jueteng so that instead of corrupt officials, the government can earn billions from it?

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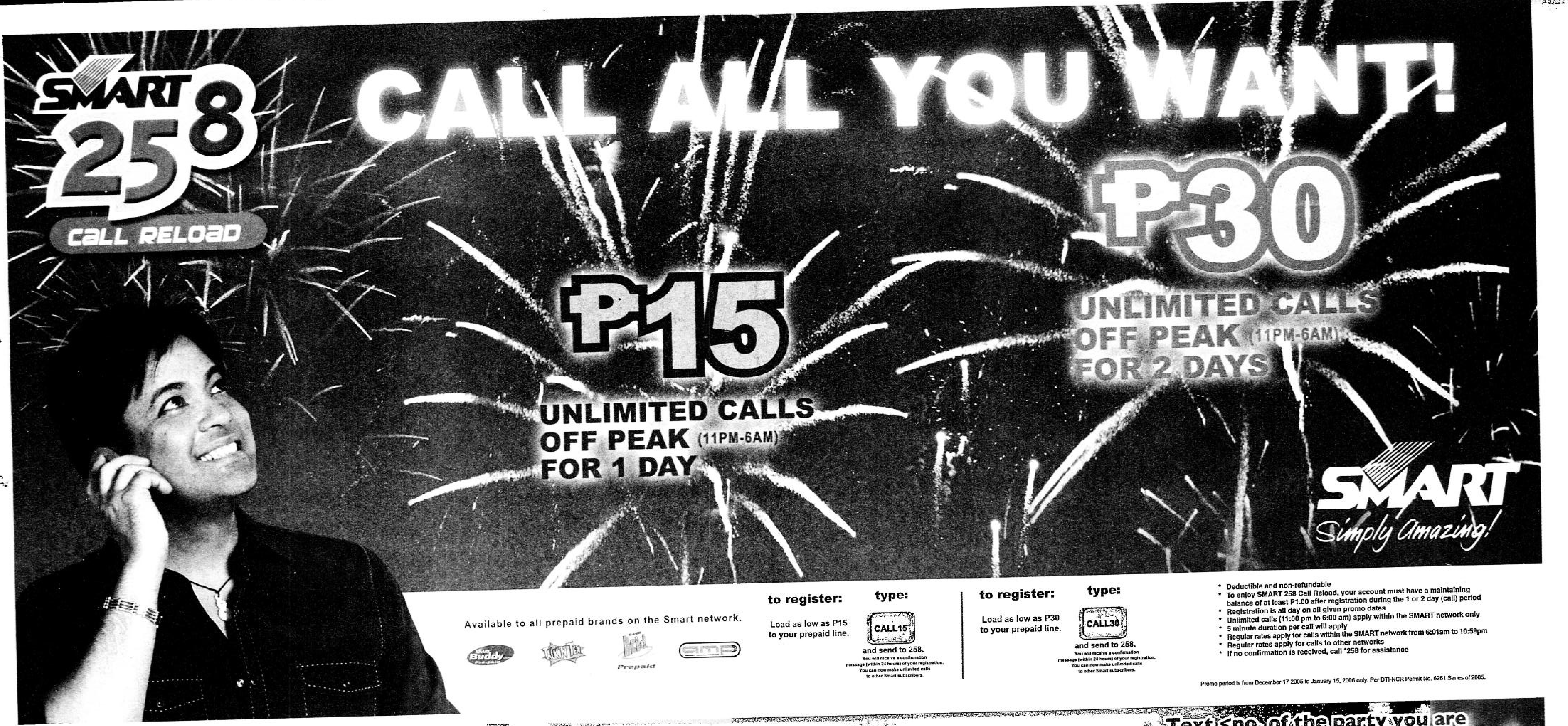

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WHAT'S INSIDE

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SEAG record breakers get PSC bonuses

By Marc Anthony Reyes

CASH INCENTIVES TOTALLING P300,000 await two athletes who set new Southeast Asian Games records during the 23rd SEAG held last month, plus long-distance runner Eduardo Buenavista who didn't get to claim his prize three years ago.

Philippine Sports Commission executive director Guillermo Iroy yesterday said he has already approved three checks of P100,000 each to hammer thrower Arneil Ferreira, long jumper Henry Dagmil and Buenavista, who set a SEAG record in the 2003 Vietnam Games.

The move was in reaction to the INQUIRER story which reported the situation of Ferreira, who had wondered if he was entitled to a separate prize for setting a new SEAG record—one of only two by a Filipino competitor in the recent SEAG.

"I have already prepared their checks after we reviewed the Incentive Act, which gives the record breaker the same amount of cash incentive for the worth of the medal they won," Iroy said.

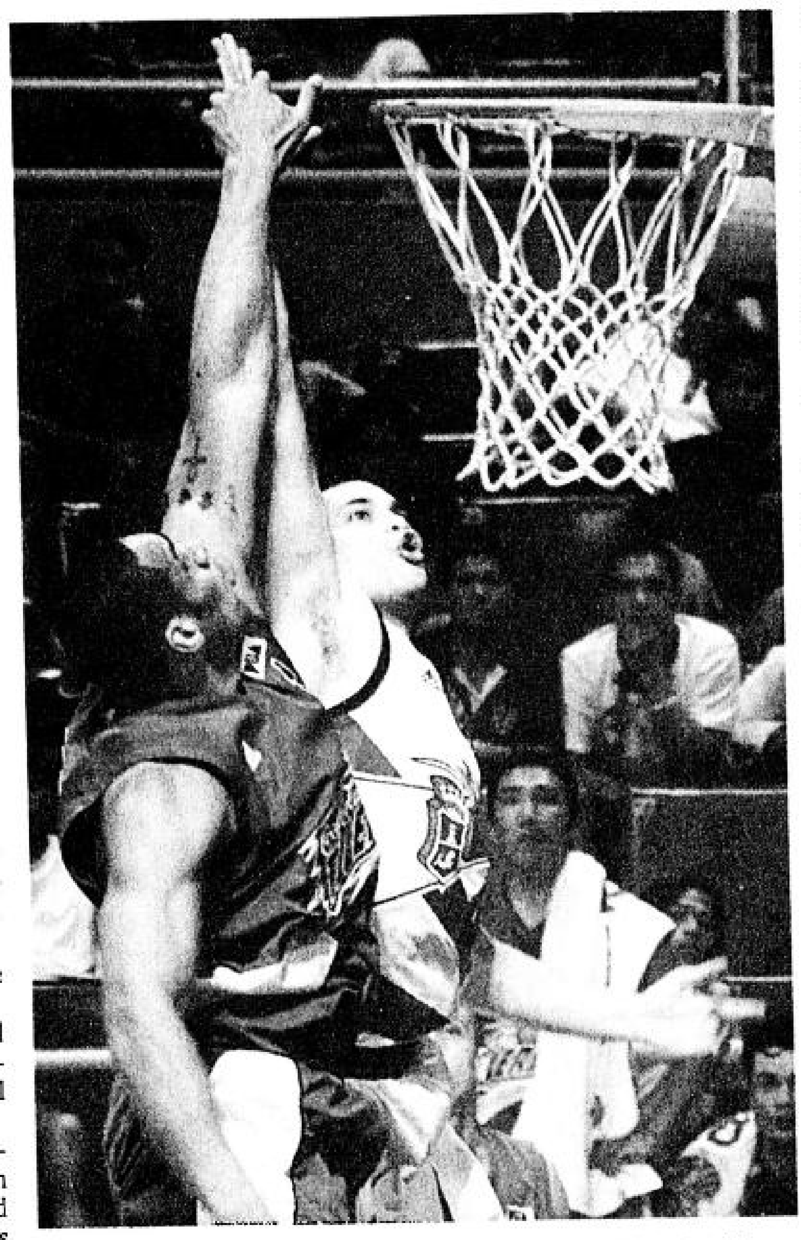
Apparently, there is also a provision in Republic Act 9064 rewarding athletes who set new record in international competitions.

Iroy, who assumed his position along with PSC chief William "Butch" Ramirez only in January 2005, failed to explain why Buenavista did not get the prize money outside of his P100,000 for winning the 5,000m gold in the Vietnam SEAG.

"Buenavista is included for the new record he set in the 2003," added Iroy.

Ferreira and Dagmil had already received P100,000 each from President Macapagal-Arroyo before Christmas for their gold medal achievements.

Ferreira last week asked if he was up for another incentive for registering 60.47 meters, which shattered a 12-year-old mark (58.80m) posted by Wong Tee Kui of Malaysia. Also getting his rightful reward was Dagmil who bettered the 7.79m mark with his 9.81m leap.



DANNY SEIGLE (right) escapes from the defense of Ali Peek of Coca Cola at the Cuneta Astrodome. RUDY ESPERAS

Negrense winners in SEAG receive special incentives

DUMAGUETE CITY—FOR BRINGING HONOR to the province and the country, eight athletes from Negros Oriental who won medals in the recent South East Asian Games have received cash incentives from the provincial government.

The eight were: Maristela Torres, gold medal in individual long jump; Jennifer Chan, gold and silver medals in archery, compound team and compound individual, respectively; Joan Chan, gold in archery, compound team event; Mark Javier, gold in archery recurve team event; Maridel Manaban and Miolle Gabiligno who got two gold medals each in dragon boat race team events, 500 and 1,000 meter sprint; Joey Barba, silver in mountain bike downhill individual; and Michael Jorolan, silver in water polo, team event.

Torres received P20,000 and Jennifer Chan P35,000.

Joan Chan, who was not around during the handing of incentives, will receive P15,000; Javier and Barba will get P15,000 each, Manaban and Gabiligno P30,000 each; and Jorolan P10,000.

"We are very proud of you for bringing honor to the province and the country," said Negros Oriental Gov. George P. Arnaiz as he handed the incentives to the winning athletes on Wednesday.

He said the provincial government, through the Sangguniang Panlalawigan, decided to give the rewards, "hoping that it will also encourage other athletes in the province to excel in sports competition."

Arnaiz said the provincial government, on the recommendation of provincial sports coordinator Ernesto "Buddy" Ravello, decided to give P20,000 incentive for individual gold medal winner; P15,000 for gold medal for team event and silver medal for individual event; and P10,000 for silver medal in team event.

The Negros Oriental athletes said the strong support of the government to them and the all the other Filipino athletes was one of the main factors that made the Philippines the over-all champion in the recent Southeast Asian Games.

They also thanked the First Gentleman Miguel Arroyo for the financial and moral support he extended to the Filipino athletes during the competition. *Romy G. Amarado, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Taxes for gears hound Philsoc in debt fix

By Musong R. Castillo

THE PHILIPPINE SOUTHEAST ASIAN GAMES Organizing Committee can sell equipment used in the biennial competition, but prospective buyers will have to bear the tax bite.

The Philippine Sports Commission made this clarification yesterday after the Philsoc announced it was planning to raise much-needed funds to settle outstanding debts.

"You cannot sell those equipment without paying duties," PSC commissioner Richie Garcia told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview yesterday. "The PSC is not interested in buying them."

Taxes amounting to millions would be charged by the Bureau of Customs to entities seeking to purchase equipment used during the last SEAG.

Philsoc secretary general Steve Hontiveros said on Thursday that selling the equipment was a course of action that they could take in order to raise money to help pay off more than P60 million in debts. He was hoping the PSC could buy the used equipment and donate them to various National Sports Associations.

But Garcia has the exact opposite in mind: "They can donate it or give it to the PSC for the use of the athletes. We've helped them enough."

Most of the equipment used for the Games were shipped from countries in Europe and Asia through the PSC. Although the Philsoc paid for most of them, the equipment earned tax exemptions through the PSC, a government agency.

Bicycles, some of them amounting to P400,000 each, shooting equipment and boats for the traditional boat races cost the most and can be taxed like luxury cars.

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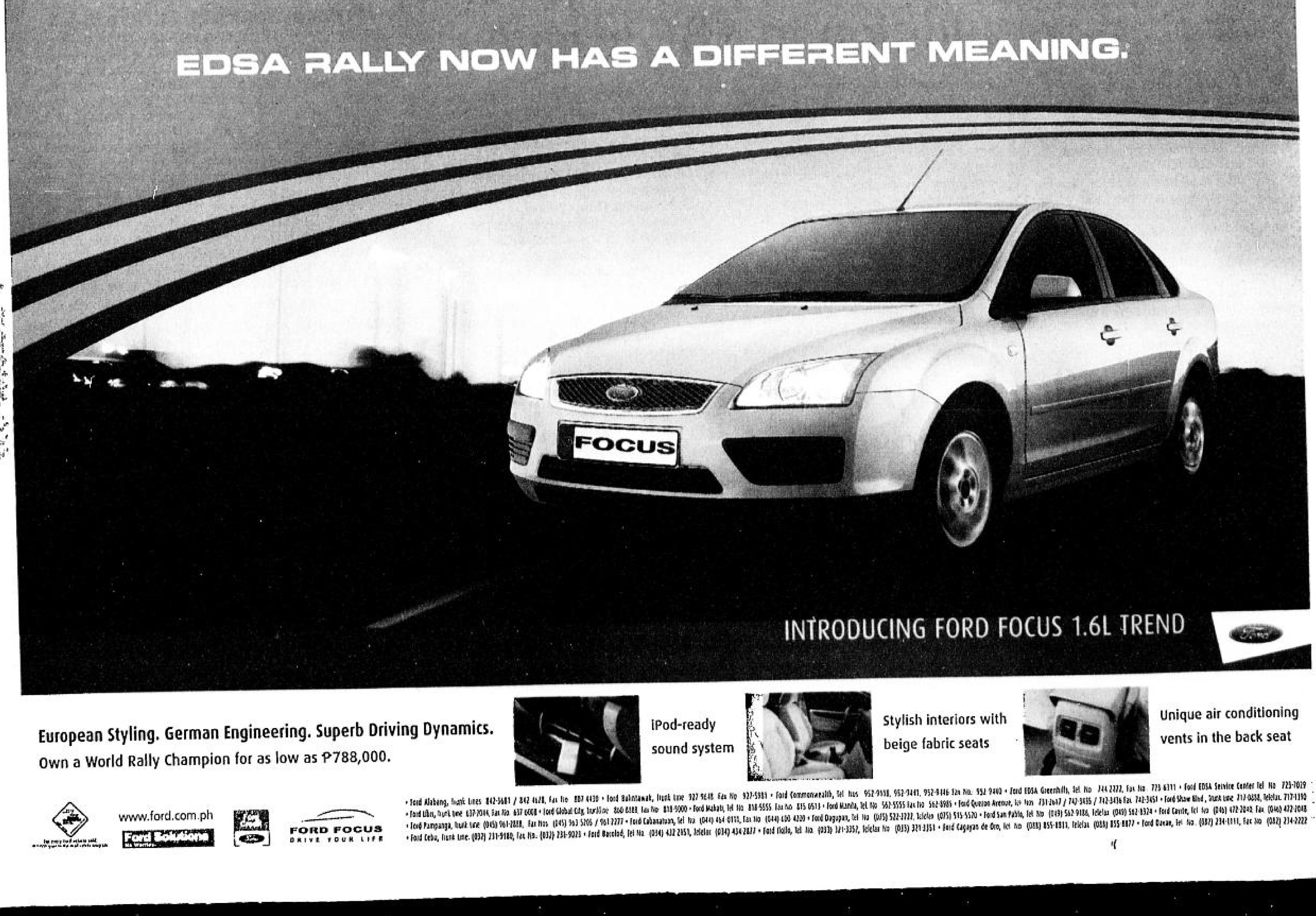
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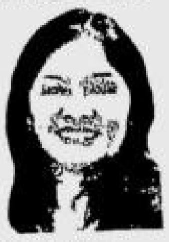
Lingering grief for Filipino tsunami victims

IN HUDDLE



Beth Celis

THIS EARLY, PBA vice-chair Ricky Vargas of PLDT has extended an invitation for me to join the annual MVP (Manny V. Pangilinan) Cup. The event will be held in November, coinciding with the anniversary of the company.

Ricky must have felt my eyes pop with envy—although we were only talking on the phone—when he mentioned the awesome list of tournament and raffle prizes that were given away last year.

"We were supposed to raffle off only one brand new Ford Focus, as the major prize, but MVP was so pleased with the turnout, he decided to raffle off a second unit," said Ricky, who could not remember who drove off that Thanksgiving night with the two vehicles.

However, Ricky distinctly remembers that the late general Wyckes Wycoco had competed in this tournament.

According to Eric Alberto, PLDT's SVP for Corporate Affairs, the MVP Cup is a golf tournament for PLDT clients, one of two of the company's major annual social events. The other is the Pasasalamat Night which comes on the heels of the MVP Cup. Both are celebrated in the fourth week of November, close to or on the actual Thanksgiving Day.

In last November's Pasasalamat, another Ford Focus was raffled off.

***

"But how can I join the MVP Cup when I don't even play golf. And while I can be considered a PLDT client, because I have two PLDT phone lines at home and a DSL, I certainly don't qualify as a big-time client like the company presidents, CEOs and COOs who are invited to the golf tournament," I told Ricky, a veteran golfer.

He told me I had one year to learn the game. And even if I'm not good enough to play the sport competitively, I could still qualify for the raffle prizes as a participant.

Of course he was only joking. So was I.

Before I forget, I wish to congratulate MVP for being chosen Management Man of the Year (2005) by the Management Association of the Philippines. The news came during the last MVP Cup. No wonder MVP was so inspired he decided to raffle off a second car. Among his predecessors to the title are SM's Henry Sy, Rafael Buenaventura and Alfonso Yuchengco.

***

Her elder brother Gerry Reyes, a successful Filipino architect based in Singapore, had disappeared with Singaporean wife Jennifer Liew and daughter Cassandra during the tsunami disaster that devastated certain parts of Thailand in December 2004. But no one had the heart and nerve to extend condolences to Sheryl Reyes, sponsorship agent for players, at the time.

It was only after almost a year later that Sheryl's friends could openly offer their sympathies. Late last year, Gerry's and Cassandra's bodies were found through DNA matching. Jennifer, however, was still missing.

Sheryl and her mother flew to Thailand yesterday to claim the remains and bring them home after cremation.

My heart bleeds. Our deepest sympathies to Sheryl and her family.

***

Look at this list: Atoy Co, Lim Eng Beng, Alfrancis Chua, Benny Cheng, Sunny Co, Gilbert Lao, Paul Du, Kenneth Yap, Alex Tan, Reynold So.

So what do you think these guys have in common, aside from all of them being Filipino-Chinese cagers?

Well, they're all products of the popular Tiong Lian League and they will all be awarded special plaques of recognition "for being outstanding alumni of the participating schools" during the opening the 30th season today at the UNO Gym in Sta. Cruz.

The Tiong Lian league has established a reputation for producing fine cagers, and coaches from the major leagues watch the games to scout for talents.

Bondad heads RP Ladies Open entries

NATIONAL TEAM STANDOUT FRANCES BONDAD is playing in the 44th Philippine Ladies Open golf championship, after all.

The 17-year-old Bondad, winner of the event two years ago and third placer last year, registered at the 11th hour to spearhead the local challenge in the Open featuring at least 30 foreign participants from seven countries at the Manila Golf Club course on Jan. 11-13.

"We're more than glad to have Frances back for the third straight year," said Nancy Ortiga, president of the organizing Women's Golf Association of the Philippines. "We really thought we're going to miss her this time."

Bondad's trip is reportedly being shouldered by golf patron Ricky Razon to bolster her preparations for the Asian Games in Qatar. She is scheduled to arrive on Monday.

The championship bid of the daughter of a Filipino couple based in New South Wales appears tough with the return of former champion Thuhachinii Selvaratnam of Sri Lanka and last year's runner-up Woo Young-kyung of South Korea.

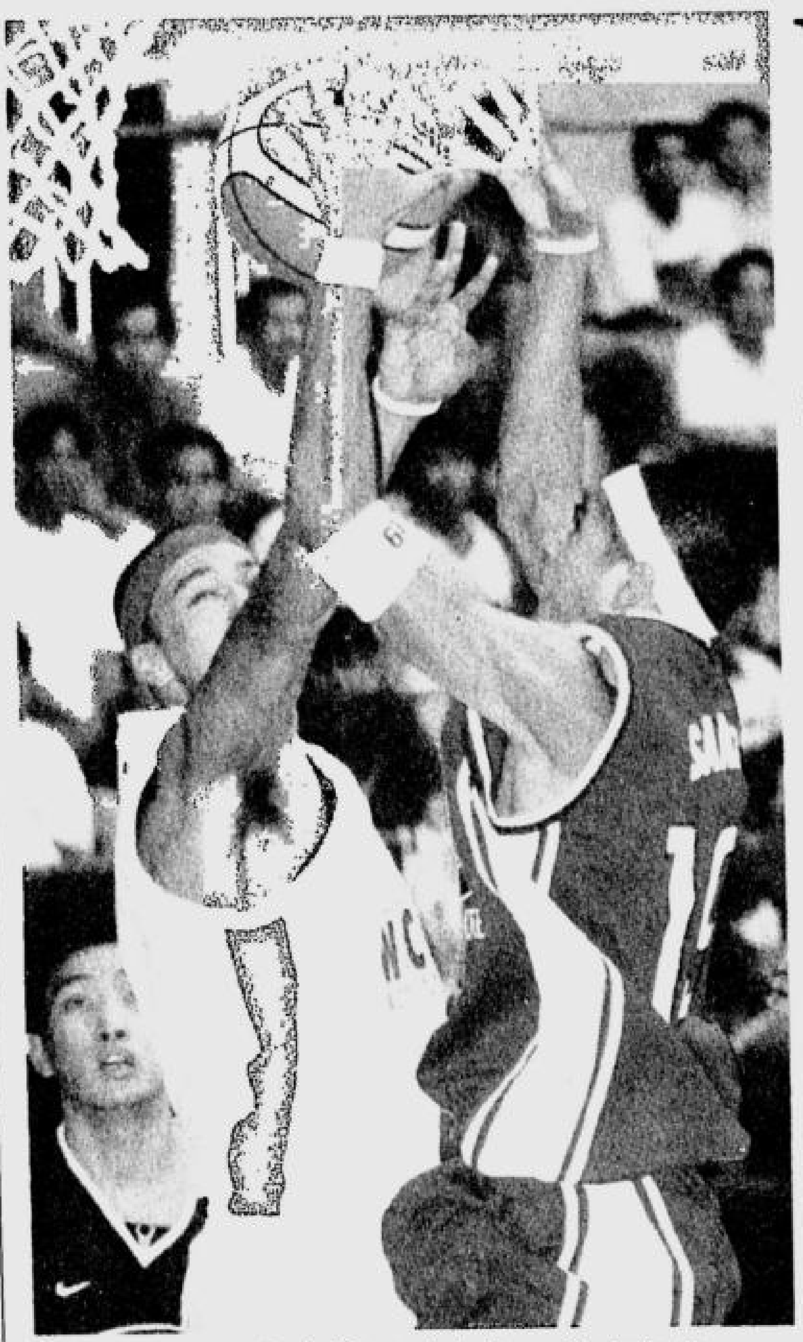
Woo is one of seven Korean players entered in the event, all single handicappers and poised to make a strong big in the tourney sponsored by the International Container Terminal Services, Inc., First Gentleman Foundation, Philippine Charity Sweepstakes, PSC, Banco de Oro Private Banking, Pacific Online, Gilberto M. Duavit, TNT Express, Golden Donuts, Electrobus, Keystone Lamps, Crucible Gallery, All Transport Network, Carlos Palanca and Hyatt Hotels.

BONDAD

Jayvie Agojo, however, could not defend the title she won in dramatic fashion last year over Woo and Bondad.

Agojo, the Pepperdine University scholar who won a silver medal in the Southeast Asian Games, begged off due to academic pressure.

Another player to watch out for is Cristina Corpus, a Fil-American jungolfer from San Leandro, California, with a handicap of plus-0.7.



MAGNOLIA gunner Arwind Santos is challenged by Anthony Washington of Welcoat in a recent game. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Wizards seek semis slot vs Teethmasters

MAGNOLIA ICE CREAM MAY BE BLESSED with a seasoned crew, but it has also been the steady presence of Kelly Williams and Arwind Santos that has kept coach Koy Banal confident in the PBL Heroes Cup.

"Kelly is doing great wonders for the team," said Banal. "Kelly and Arwind have been working very hard to help the team win."

And the Wizards will again be banking on the young, star duo when they vie for an outright semifinal slot against Hapee-PCU at 4 p.m. today at the San Andres Gym.

While the Wizards make the road to the playoffs looks smooth, the Teethmasters must win their remaining three games to forge a playoff for an automatic semifinal berth.

Meanwhile, the Harbour Centre Portmasters try to avoid early elimination when they take on the Toyota Otis Knights at 2 p.m.

The two teams with the best win-loss records will gain outright semifinal seats. The two with the worst records will be eliminated, while the rest of the squads move on to the quarterfinal round.

Before the break, the Wizards surged to a remarkable 7-1 record after a 70-63 triumph over the Montaña Jewels.

Aside from the intimidating frontcourt combination of Williams, Santos and Mark Isip, former pro point guard Kim Valenzuela also delivered with 13 points.

STANDINGS	W	L
Magnolia	7	1
R. or Shine	5	3
G. Goose	5	4
Hapee-PCU	4	4
Montaña	4	4
Harbour	4	5
Far E. Ins.	3	6
Toyota Otis	2	7

GAMES TODAY (*San Andres Gym*)

2 p.m.—Harbour Centre vs Toyota Otis

4 p.m.—Magnolia vs Hapee-PCU

Posting back-to-back wins, the Portmasters showed renewed vigor with the addition of top amateur point guard LA Tenorio and the improved performances of rookie Rob Reyes.

Reyes, a 6-foot-5 Fil-Am center, averaged 11.5 points and 10.3 rebounds in the last three games. But the Knights have their own Fil-Am threat in Joe Devance, who leads the statistical race with averages of 15.7 points and 10 rebounds.

The Knights, too, scored one of their two wins against the Portmasters in an 85-80 overtime decision last November.

The Teethmasters, meanwhile, have been turning to their wingmen, led by Jason Castro and Mark Moreno, lately. *Jasmine W. Payo*

Visa case could knock Jaca out of Pacquiao card

By Salven L. Lagumbay, *Contributor*

THE ONLY FILIPINO FIGHTER SLATED to see action in the undercard of the Erik Morales-Manny Pacquiao rematch stands to lose the rare opportunity due to visa hassles.

Philippine super-featherweight champ Jimrex Jaca has been required by the United States Embassy to apply for a P-1 visa, thus virtually making it impossible for him to make the trip in time for the Jan. 21 fight.

"It takes around 15 days to secure a P-1 visa, so Jimrex only has a very slight chance of making it. I'll try to consult an immigration lawyer," said manager Rex "Wakee" Salud, who accompanied Jaca to the embassy yesterday.

Salud, however, sounded desperate and blamed a close associate of Manny Pacquiao for not keeping his promise to assist Jaca in his paperwork.

P-1 visa petitions, according to a website, cannot be approved until the organizer is consulted by the USCIS.

A P-1 entertainment visa is a non-immigrant document which allows foreign nationals who are athletes, artists and entertainers to enter the US for a specific event, competition or performance.

Jaca (24-1-1, 11 KOs) is scheduled to face Mexican Ivan Valle (23-5-1, 19 KOs) in an 8-round tiff in "The Battle" card set Jan. at the Thomas and Mack Center in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Pagadian City five newest addition to NBC league

PAGADIAN CITY IS THE NEWEST EXPANSION team in the National Basketball Conference (NBC).

The Pagadian Explorers have been officially accepted by NBC yesterday after a meeting between NBC secretary general Tito Palma and Explorers owner Mayor Sammy Co.

"We're elated that we have made it to the NBC," said Co. "We promise to work hard and make an impact in our initial stint."

He added that "this partnership with NBC will definitely boost .sports development as well as tourism in our city. I hope that with our participation in the NBC, people will get to explore our city."

NBC president Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla welcomed Pagadian's entry. "Pagadian is a big addition to our league. It's our goal to develop basketball in the countryside. We will continue to pursue this in the hope of uncovering new talents."

The explorers will see action in the Nature's Spring-NBC pre-season tournament in Valencia City tomorrow up to Jan. 9. Then Pagadian will host on Jan. 11-14 the third leg of the pre-season series supported by Sulpicio Lines, Spring Cooking Oil, Molten and Prime Channel.

The Explorers will be bannered by ex-pros Peter Naron and Bong Marata, former Cagayan de Oro Stars' Ronan Isidro and Ismael Culdora and local talents Orvell Saludsod, Ata Ayok, Ben Franco and Robert Valconcha.

Ed Moronez, coach of the Zamboanga City-based Southern University, will handle the team, assisted by Glicerio Pescador.

Playing team manager is Rene Pamaran.

SPORTSWATCH

P1.7M pot in Konica Minolta Pro-Am

CASH PRIZES TOTALING P1.7 MILLION ARE UP FOR GRABS IN THE 5TH Konica Minolta National Pro-Am slated Feb. 8-11 at the Riviera Golf and Country Club's Langer course, in Silang, Cavite. Heading the star-studded cast are Gerard Cantada and amateur partner J.R. Tanpinco, who will be shooting for their third straight championship. Entry free is P5,000 inclusive of free practice rounds. The tournament's executive committee, headed by co-chairs Bert Bravo and Benigno Gopez, the president of the National Golf Association of the Philippines, met with members of the organizing committee yesterday and decided to raise the prize pot from last year's P1.5 million. "By increasing the prize money, we hope that our professionals and their amateur partners will again give their best shots in the tournament," said Bravo, also president of U-Bix Corp., the tournament presenter. The Konica Minolta, headed by group manager Moriichi Miyazaki, is the tournament's title sponsor. Bravo revived the tournament, which had its beginnings in 1958 and was called the Fort Bonifacio Pro-Am, five years ago. For inquiries, call Riviera at 888-9127, (046) 414-2868 or (046) 414-2837 or the NGAP 525-6987, 524-5160, fax 521-1587, or e-mail ngapgolf@yahoo.com or ngapgolf@hotmail.com.

Canine seminar set Jan. 13-15

THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION GERMAN SHEPHERD DOG ASSOCIATION and the Central Luzon German Shepherd Dog Association are sponsoring Schutzhund Training on Jan. 13-15. The training will be conducted by Baerbel Meissner, a bronze, silver and gold medalist for Schutzhund Training from the SV of Germany. The first session, which will be held at Serye Restaurant at the Quezon Memorial Circle starting 6 p.m., will tackle the rationale of Schutzhund and will feature a film showing. The next two days will be actual field demonstration on the three phases of Schutzhund; tracking, obedience and protection (bite work). The training session is being held by the GSDF affiliates in cooperation with Nestle Purina Pro Plan. The seminar will be limited to 50 participants. For inquiries, call Nerissa at 454-5503, 454-5538 or 0918-9258324.

PCAP derby begins Monday

A CASH POT OF P2 MILLION AWAIT THE WINNERS OF THE PINOY COCKers Association of the Philippines (PCAP) Cocker of the Year race, which will start on Monday at the Makati Coliseum. Scheduled is a 5-cock derby that will feature more than 65 fights. Participants must submit entries tomorrow, from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Call 896-3545 or 895-6475 for details. The PCAP executive committee has lined up 13 derbies, composed of a dozen 5-cockers and an 8-cock grand championship, for the 2006 cock season. Next up at the same venue is a 4-cock derby on Jan. 12, with P300,000 at stake for an entry fee of P10,000. Thirty-five entries with cockhouse reservations have joined the derby being hosted by the FTE Happy Gamefarms group of Makati.

Roligon hosts Cash Premyo today

THE CASH PREMYO 3-COCK DERBY RESUMES TODAY WITH 60 FIGHTS on tap at the Roligon Mega Cockpit. Sponsors of the event hosted by Roligon employees are Lakpue Drug Inc. and Thunderbird Enertone. As much as P250,000 await the winners for an entry fee of P4,400. A big number of entries are also expected in the Kayang-Kaya 4-cock derby on Jan. 14 with a guaranteed prize of P400,000 for an entry fee of P6,600. On Jan. 31, Feb. 2, 4, 7 and 9, Roligon's 16th Anniversary 6-cock derby takes center stage. This year's edition boasts the biggest prize-ever of P4 million plus a brand new Toyota Innova. Call 851-2275, 833-1638 at 852-9812 for reservation of cockhouses.

Tiong Lian-Hitachi Cup caging today; Co, Lim & Co honorees

GAMES TODAY (*UNO Gym*)

10 a.m.—St. Jude vs. Chiang Kai Shek (Aspirants)

11:15 a.m.—St. Stephen vs. UNO (Aspirants)

5 p.m.—UNO vs. Grace Christian (Junior)

6:30 p.m.— Xavier vs. Chiang Kai Shek (Junior)

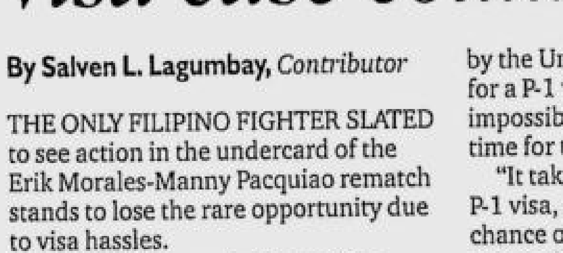
THE 39TH METRO MANILA TIONG LIAN BASketball Association-Hitachi Cup basketball championships reel off today at the UNO gym.

Four matches—two each in the junior and aspirants divisions—usher in the league's 30th season.

UNO goes up against Grace Christian at 5 p.m. and Xavier School battles Chiang Kai Shek at 6:30 in the junior division.

In the aspirants category, it will be St. Jude against Chiang Kai Shek at 10 a.m. and host St. Stephen against UNO at 11:15.

Spicing up the hour-long opening ceremony is the awarding of plaques of recognition to the 10 most outstanding league players since 1976, the year the league was formed.



AWARDEES: From left, Atoy Co, Lim Eng Beng and Alfrancis Chua

To be honored are Sunny Co, Lim Eng Beng, Fortunato "Atoy" Co, Benito Cheng, Alfrancis Chua, Gilbert Lao Paul Du, Kenneth Yap, Alex Tan and Reynold So.

Defending champion St. Stephen High School will make its debut against UNO on Jan. 11. Junior teams Hope Christian High School and St. Jude Catholic School collide at 5:30 p.m. on the same day.

St. Stephen brought down Xavier School, 2-1, in their best-of-three title clash last year.

Poker King Challenge final leg gets going

THE SIXTH LEG OF THE POKER KING CHALLENGE, a series of non-wager tournaments, starts today at the Casino Filipino Silahis of the Grand Boulevard Hotel on Roxas Boulevard. Registration starts at 12 noon.

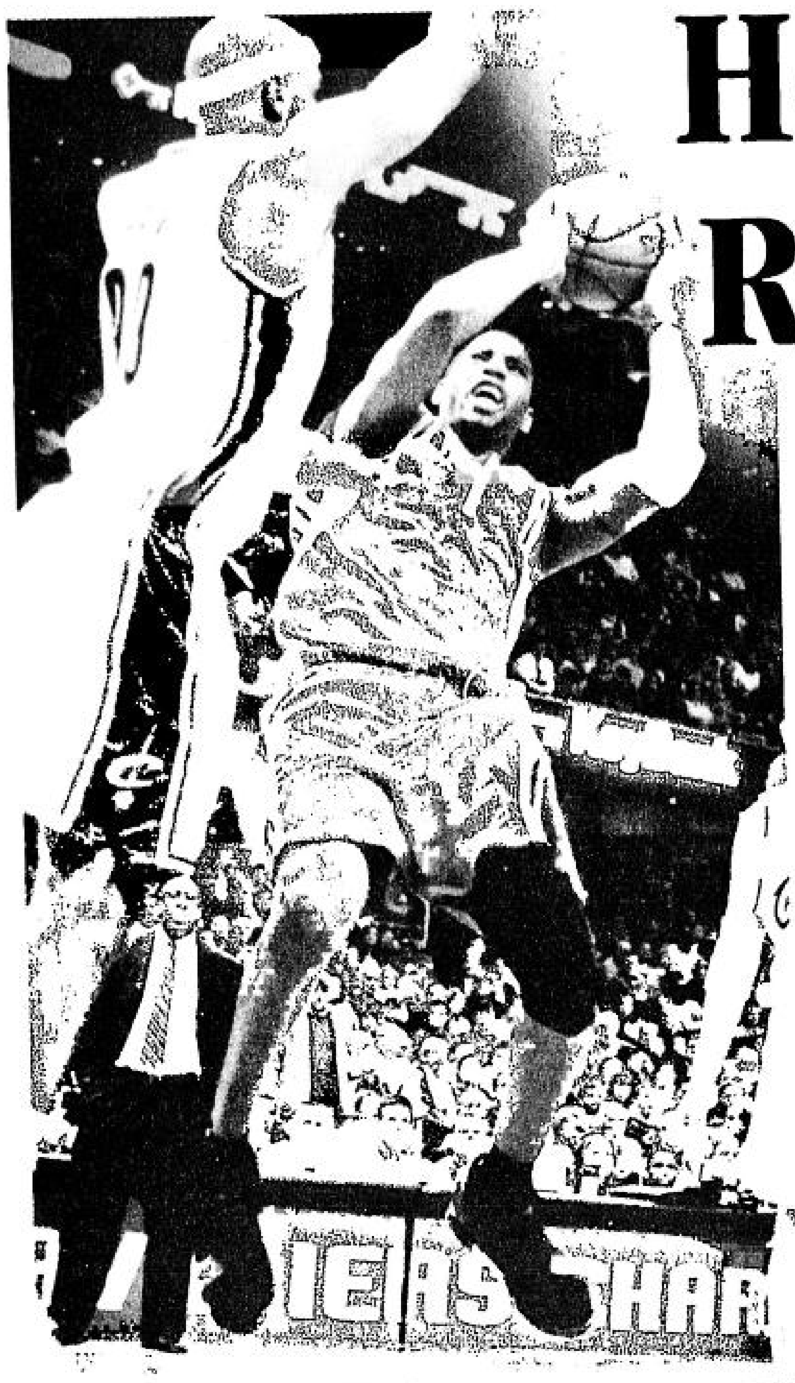
Prizes with a total cash value of about P60,000 await the leg champion, in addition to trophies and gift items from tournament sponsors Poker Club of the Philippines, Philippine Gaming Corp. (Pagcor), Jack Daniels, Miller Genuine Draft Beer, Bicycle Playing Cards, Star Paper, Hyatt Hotel and Casino, Ralph's Wine, and MyReviewerOnline, the Internet knowledge-builder.

PCP president Ray "Butch" Gamboa said the top three leg winners of the sixth and final leg will join the other leg winners in the Grand Finals slated Jan. 28 at Casino Filipino Tagaytay.

The leg champions are Mon Gelvezon, Perry Calalang, Angeles City engineer Nicolo Palo, Cebu City businessman Jessie Dy and business executive Jason Lim.

For inquiries, call 817-9092 or visit www.POkerClubofthePhilippines.com.

Hot McGrady launches Rockets past Cavaliers



MCGRADY: Fourth straight 30-point game. REUTERS

CLEVELAND—Tracy McGrady scored 34 points, Juwan Howard made two late jumpers and the Houston Rockets got their second straight quality road win Thursday, 90-81, over the Cleveland Cavaliers.

McGrady surpassed 30 points for the fourth straight game as the Rockets, who have been hit by injuries all season, followed up a win at Washington by handing the Cavaliers just their fourth loss in 17 home games.

LeBron James had 32 points, nine rebounds and five assists for Cleveland, but the Cavs fell to 1-1 since learning that guard Larry Hughes, the club's second-leading scorer, could miss two months with a broken finger.

Zydrunas Ilgauskas had 17 points for the Cavs, who didn't help themselves by going just 8-of-18 on free throws and 7-of-29 on 3-pointers.

Pacers 99, Warriors 89

In Oakland, California, Stephen Jackson had 27 points, five rebounds and three assists and Indiana jumped to a quick lead it nearly relinquished in the waning moments of a victory over Golden State.

Derek Fisher made two free throws with 1:46 left to get Golden State within 91-89, before Jackson scored and was fouled on the other end but missed a free throw.

Austin Croshere added 17 points, nine rebounds, two assists and two steals for the Pacers, who bounced back from a 106-86 loss at Denver a night earlier that started their four-game West Coast swing.

Fred Jones added 11 points for the Pacers before fouling out with 4:11 left. *AP*

Italian ends Hingis' run

GOLD COAST, AUSTRALIA—MARTINA HINGIS' perfect record in her comeback tournament ended Friday with a loss in the semifinals of the Australian women's hardcourt championships—and she has a minor hip injury.

Fourth-seeded Flavia Pennetta of Italy beat the 25-year-old Hingis, 1-6, 7-6 (2), 6-2, at Royal Pines, ending Hingis' three-match winning streak in her return from retirement after three years away due to foot, ankle and heal injuries.

Following the match, she announced she had pulled out of her scheduled semifinal doubles match later Friday with partner Tatiana Golovin of Russia due to a left hip flexor strain.

Hingis plans to play in next week's Sydney International on a wild card and the Australian Open at Melbourne beginning Jan. 16, a tournament she has won three times.

"I've got a couple of days' rest now, so I'll just try to flush it out before next week," Hingis said of her injury. "I've got some time."

Hingis said she tried to get through the match, despite the strain.

"As a player and a competitor you try to overcome things like that and still play until the end of the match," she said. "I don't want to take anything away from Pennetta, she played a great match. I was able to compete with her." *AP*

HINGIS: Hip injury REUTERS

Journeyman Browne seizes 1-shot Mercedes lead

KAPALUA, HAWAII—AMERICAN JOURNEYMAN Olin Browne upstaged some of the game's best players by taking a one-shot lead in the Mercedes Championship's first round on Thursday.

The 46-year-old, who qualified for the PGA Tour's season-opening event by winning last year's Deutsche Bank Championship, reeled off five birdies in nine holes on his way to a four-under-par 69 at the Kapalua Resort.

On a day of tugging breezes, swirling clouds and bright sunshine, Browne picked up shots at the fifth, seventh, eighth, 10th and 13th to set the pace in the tournament that assembles the winners from the previous PGA Tour season.

Although he slipped back with a bogey at the 555-yard 15th, the Florida resident parred the last three holes to stay in front of a chasing pack headed by world number two Vijay Singh.

The Fijian, the only member of the world's top five playing this week, birdied two of the last four holes for a 70.

Defending champion Stuart Appleby of Australia, chasing a record-equaling third victory in a row at Kapalua, was a further shot back in a tie for third with Spaniard Sergio Garcia, 2001 US PGA champion David Toms and Sweden's Carl Pettersson.

"I came out here with my family a couple of weeks ago and have kind of eased into the whole Hawaiian thing," a smiling Browne told reporters. "I'm feeling pretty good right now.

"I think everybody who comes here understands what a great tournament this is and I certainly appreciate it tremendously.

"I would like to play well enough to be invited back, and there's only one way to get back," added Browne, who ended a PGA Tour victory drought of more than six years by winning in Boston last October. *Reuters*

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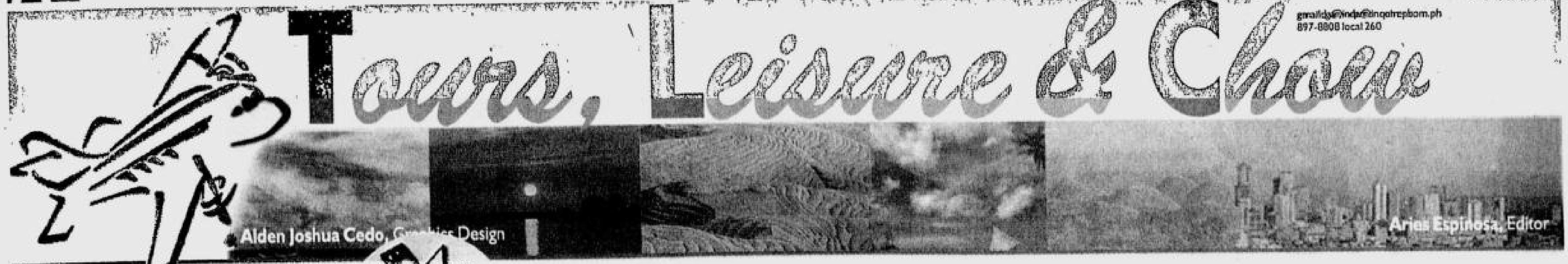

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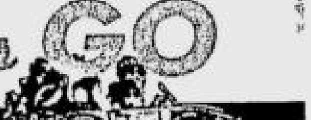

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New inventions at CPK

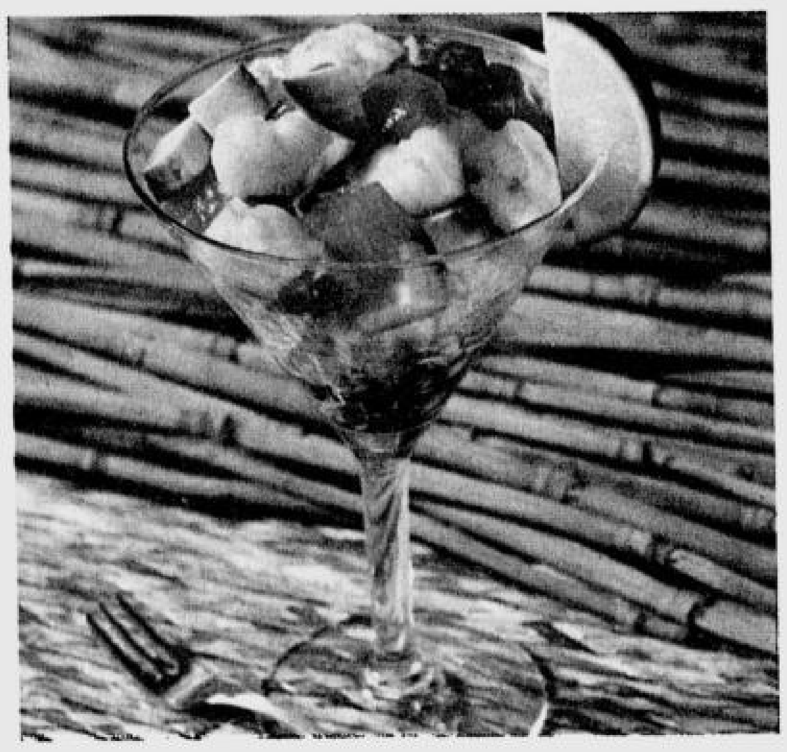
WHAT IS THE WORLD'S GREATest invention? Pizza? And California Pizza Kitchen reinvented it.

A casual dining restaurant that promises surprising adventures for the whole family, CPK rolls-out its newest menu. As the leader in gourmet pizzas, home of the original BBQ Chicken Pizza and other delicious heart-baked pizzas, made-to-order pastas, creative salads, soups, appetizers and desserts, CPK keeps on innovating its already delicious dishes.

Fresh finds are Ahi Martini - ahi sashimi or seared tuna, shrimp and avocado lightly tossed in a Hawaiian-style marinade; Bangkok Calamari - lightly fried calamari served with Sweet Thai dipping sauce and homemade remoulade; Waldorf Chicken salad - a bicoastal rendition of a NYC favorite; Field Greens, chilled chicken breast, Gorgonzola cheese; Lettuce Wraps - minced chicken and/or shrimp, wok seared with shiitake mushrooms, water chestnuts, green onions in a soy ginger sauce, served on a bed of crispy rice noodles with a side of spicy chili ginger sauce; and an exciting pizza flavor, White Pizza - a combination of mozzarella, Fontina, Ricotta, Parmesan and Pecorino Romano cheeses with fresh sautéed spinach and garlic with applewood smoked bacon.

Be adventurous and try something new at any of these CPK branches: Glorietta 3 Ayala Center, Makati; Corte de las Palmas Alabang Town Center; Shangri-La Mall and Bellagio Square, Tomas Morato.

You can also enjoy CPK Pizzas at CPK Asap, our quick-service resto, located at Greenhills Promenade.



Best for the New Year at Dusit Hotel Nikko

JOIN DUSIT HOTEL Nikko as they journey anew to a year of greater promise as the hotel showcase Asian hospitality, at its finest this January.

From Jan. 29 to 31, The Café joins in celebrating the Chinese New Year and adds in its selection traditional Chinese menu specialties.

Well-loved Benkay Japanese Restaurant brings back this month of January the 'Nabe Kaiseki' (Japanese Hot Pot Fair) for diners to continuously enjoy generous servings of noodles and vegetables fresh from the Hot Pot bowl.

Have a taste of authentic Vietnamese cuisine as Thien Duong's Chef Nguyen gives diners a sample of his 'Executive Set Menu' creations made available for lunch and dinner.

Tickle your palates this January at Benjarong Royal Thai restaurant with Chef Tun's flavorful creations designed to give you a taste of Thailand's rich heritage. Offered from Jan. 18 to 31.

Fiesta San Miguel treats diners to its newest lunch and dinner offering - the 'Pinoy Big Bunch'. Take your pick from six (6) mouth-watering 'Pinoy Big Bunch' menus during lunchtime (11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.) for a complete meal for only P250 nett per person.

In celebration of the Filipino spirit, Fiesta San Miguel features delectable a la carte dishes in its 'Chef's Recommendations' to commemorate the "Ati-Atihan Festival" of Kalibo, Aklan and the "Sinulog Festival" of Cebu. Offered for lunch and dinner for the whole month of January 2006.

For inquiries, please call 867-3333. Advance dining reservation is advised.

Somerset serviced residences partners with Gawad Kalinga

THE ASCOTT GROUP'S THREE SOMERSET serviced residences in Manila recently partnered with Gawad Kalinga to raise funds and help build homes for the less fortunate residents of the Philippines. Gawad Kalinga's GK777 programme sets out to provide homes and nurture communities working towards building 700,000 homes in 7,000 communities in 7 years.

Through the Gawad Kalinga project, Somerset serviced residences lives out the true meaning of its Ascott Heartware service philosophy where it hopes to touch people from the heart. The GK777 is part of its community responsibility initiative.

As the largest serviced residence company in the country, Somerset serviced residences take pride in providing a second home to business and leisure travelers as well as corporate executives who have been posted to Manila on short or long-term work assignments.

The three strategically located properties in Makati City - Somerset Millennium, Somerset Olympia and Somerset Salcedo Makati offer a comprehensive range of facilities along with many interesting resident programmes that cater to their social needs.

With this partnership with Gawad Kalinga, Somerset hopes to contribute back to the Filipino community.

The Bellevue Hotel hosts int'l equestrian competition

THE BELLEVUE HOTEL, southern Metro Manila's definitive place for premier business and social events, was the official residence of the World Cup Championship—Asian Leg 2005 held in the Alabang Country Club recently.

Bellevue became home to the international athletes while in Manila. Bellevue general manager Patrick Chan and marketing and communications manager Ryan Chan also hosted an exciting awards ceremony for the players at the luxurious Bellevue Grand Ballroom. Among those who graced the festive affair were the Ambak group from Malaysia, former SEA Games gold medalist Jones Lanza and the champion of the World Cup Asian Leg 2005 Toni Leviste. After recognition of the winners and a bountiful dinner especially prepared by the Bellevue executive chef Hans Peter Eckstein, the attendees were treated to an evening of drinking and dancing with music from The Bloomfields.

The Bellevue Hotel is a constant supporter of sports events at the southern Metro Manila area, organizing the yearly Bellevue Cups. The Bellevue Grand Ballroom, touted as the south's premier concert venue, is also Alabang's favorite venue for awarding ceremonies and international conferences. For inquiries, call 771-8181.

Shown are The Bellevue marketing and communications manager Ryan Chan with equestrian enthusiasts Ritchie Garcia,, Carlos Arguelles and Joey Yaptinchay.

City Garden Hotel January treats

THIS HOLIDAY SEASON, LET City Garden Hotel Makati offer you wonderful treats.

A great way to spend a relaxing day or a long weekend with your loved ones, City Garden Hotel's tastefully elegant guest rooms come for as low as P1,450 per person on twin-sharing basis inclusive of a choice of free sumptuous buffet breakfast for two or a Spa service at the hotel's Body & Face by Mendez, free use of its open-air swimming pool at the Roofdeck and its fully equipped Gym at the Penthouse. Two (2) children below 12 years of age, stay for free.

For those special get-togethers and reunions, its Party Package comes for as low as P24,750+ inclusive of buffet menu or barbecue grill and discounts on drinks. Its wedding and debut packages come for as low as P59,000+ inclusive of a buffet menu for 100 persons, a cake, souvenirs, floral arrangements, and other amenities. Thus, providing value for money and hassle-free arrangements. Reception venues may be held at its cozy, fully –equipped function rooms or at the al fresco Roofdeck, with a wonderful view of the metropolis.

The hotel is just five minutes from the Rockwell and Glorietta malls and the Makati Commercial and Business District. As an added amenity, the hotel is offering free scheduled shuttle service to the Makati CBD.

THE PALM HOTELS JOINS WEDDING EXHIBITS

The Palm Hotels Banquet was one of the participants of the recently concluded Heavenly Weddings exhibit at the Clamshell I, Intramuros, Manila. Shown in the photo are (from left) Enrico Adducol - banquet waiter, Arabelle Garing del Rosario - The Executive Plaza Hotel banquet account manager, Jazel Anne Marie Mangali - The Palm Hotels banquet coordinator, Katrina Mendoza - Las Palmas Hotel banquet account manager, Lizette Narvas - The Executive Plaza Hotel banquet account manager, Lailani de Castro - The Palm Hotels banquet and catering sales manager, and Celso Gondra - captain waiter.

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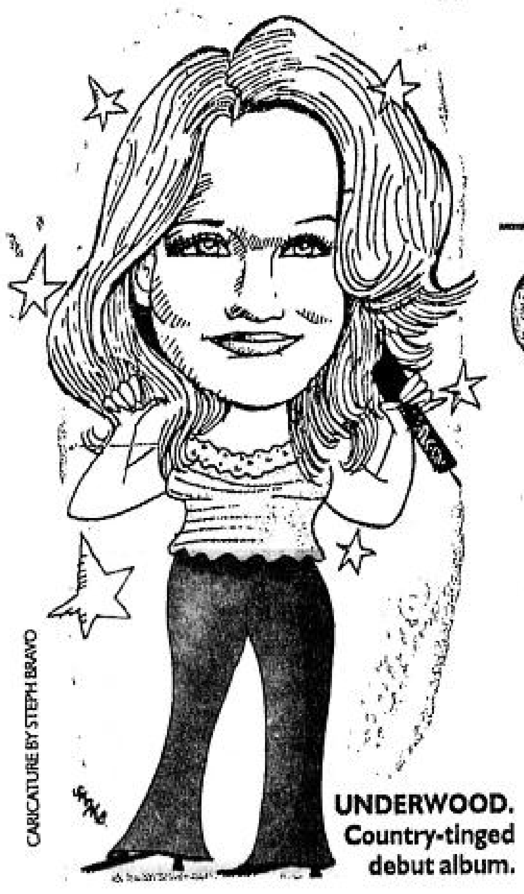
Choice new albums for 2006



CARICATURE BY STEPH BRAVO

UNDERWOOD. Country-tinged debut album.

SHOW BIZ Q & A

Rito P. Asilo

FROM ANNE ANTONIO: "I'M A MUsic buff. Can you recommend new titles—pop, jazz, standards—I can look for in the market?"

These days, it's hard to keep track of new titles from our favorite recording artists—but keep track we did! Here's a rundown of some top singers' latest projects:

Heading our list is Michael Bublé's latest disc, **"Caught in the Act,"** a live recording of songs from his concert in LA's Wiltern Theater. The Canadian crooner's advantage lies not just in his powerful pipes and enviable skill for vocal improvisation; he also knows how to connect with his audience—a master showman, indeed!

Included in the album are fresh versions of his self-penned No. 1 hit, "Home"; the lovely Stevie Wonder ditty, "You and I"; the sultry duet, "You'll Never Find Another Love Like Mine," with silky voiced Italian diva, Laura Pausini, and the Charlie Chaplin classic, "Smile."

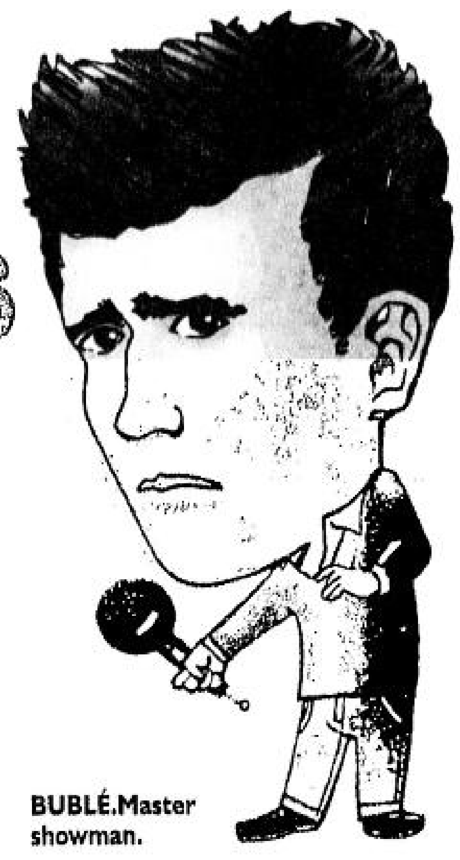
We've seen the concert's video, and we're sorry that his smashing rendition of Maroon 5's "This Love" isn't included in the album. —*And* a surprise visit from another David Foster protégé, Josh Groban!

Quartet

Another album worth your time—and money—is the latest release, **"Ancora,"** from Simon Cowell's *popera* quartet, Il Divo. The album showcases the talented classical-pop foursome's awesome vocal skills.

Included in the playlist are versions of "Unchained Melody" (in Italian), "All By Myself" (in

CHOICE/ A2-3



CARICATURE BY LA MISTADES

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Clint Black dabbles in pop-rock in 'Spend My Time'

By Noelani Torre

BLACK. Reawakened interest in country music.

THE YEAR WAS 1989, AND THE AMERICAN country music scene, though not exactly dead, was in dire need of a good shaking up. It wasn't that nobody listened to country anymore, but that there hadn't been anything fresh in years, and the genre's fan base was getting narrower.

It was, in short, the perfect time for the emergence of a new star. With a guitar, a black Stetson, and an aw-shucks grin—not to mention that good, old down-home voice and a talent for hooks—Texas-bred singer-songwriter Clint Black reawakened mainstream radio's interest in country when his debut single, "A Better Man," hit No. 1.

It was the first time in 15 years that a new male country artist had hit the top spot with a debut single, and the album that followed—"Killin' Time"—turned double platinum.

Forefront

By the end of the year, Black walked away with most of the major prizes at the Academy of Country Music Awards. The ensuing years saw his emergence into the forefront of country music, and though his popularity would later be overshadowed by followers like Garth Brooks, he would always remain at the vanguard of the newly minted New Traditional Country subgenre.

Black released eight more albums in the '90s, and most of them spawned singles that went gold and platinum. At the advent of the new millennium, he disappeared from the limelight so that he and actress-wife Lisa Hartman could take care of their newborn baby.

Recently, though, Black reemerged with the album, "Spend My Time." If you're an "Oprah" watcher, you may have caught his "After the Show" performance in one episode, wherein he moved practically everybody to tears with his rendition of that album's title song.

Mixed reviews

"Spend My Time," which veered away from country and into the more widely-appealing but dangerously bland territory of adult pop-rock, got mixed reviews from critics and fans, but he returns to form in "Drinkin' Songs and Other Logic" —and it's a very good form, indeed!

There's a good reason why Clint Black has remained a star after all these years. Not only is he a charismatic performer, he is also a talented songwriter. His music is a blend of old-style country sensibility laden with a rock n' roll flavor straight out of the '60s and '70s.

And when he's feeling adventurous, he incorporates some rhythm n' blues into the mix. It's no wonder, then, that quite a number of his fans aren't even regular listeners of country music. Talent, after all, knows no boundaries!

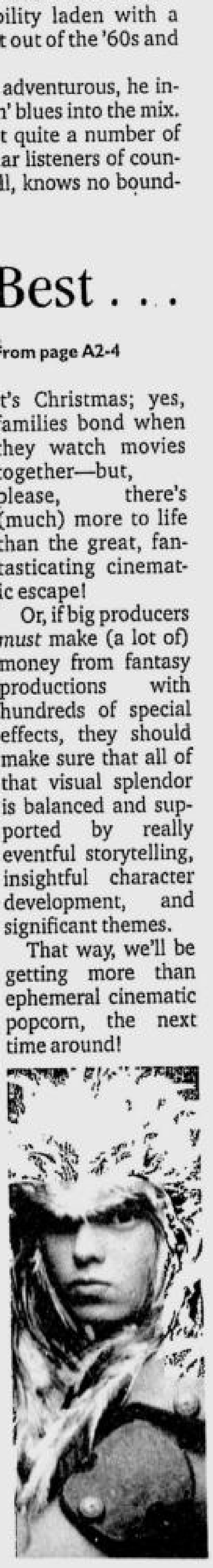
Best . . .

From page A2-4

it's Christmas; yes, families bond when they watch movies together—but, please, there's (much) more to life than the great, fantasticating cinematic escape!

Or, if big producers *must* make (a lot of) money from fantasy productions with hundreds of special effects, they should make sure that all of that visual splendor is balanced and supported by really eventful storytelling, insightful character development, and significant themes.

That way, we'll be getting more than ephemeral cinematic popcorn, the next time around!


RICHARD Gutierrez topbills "Mulawin."

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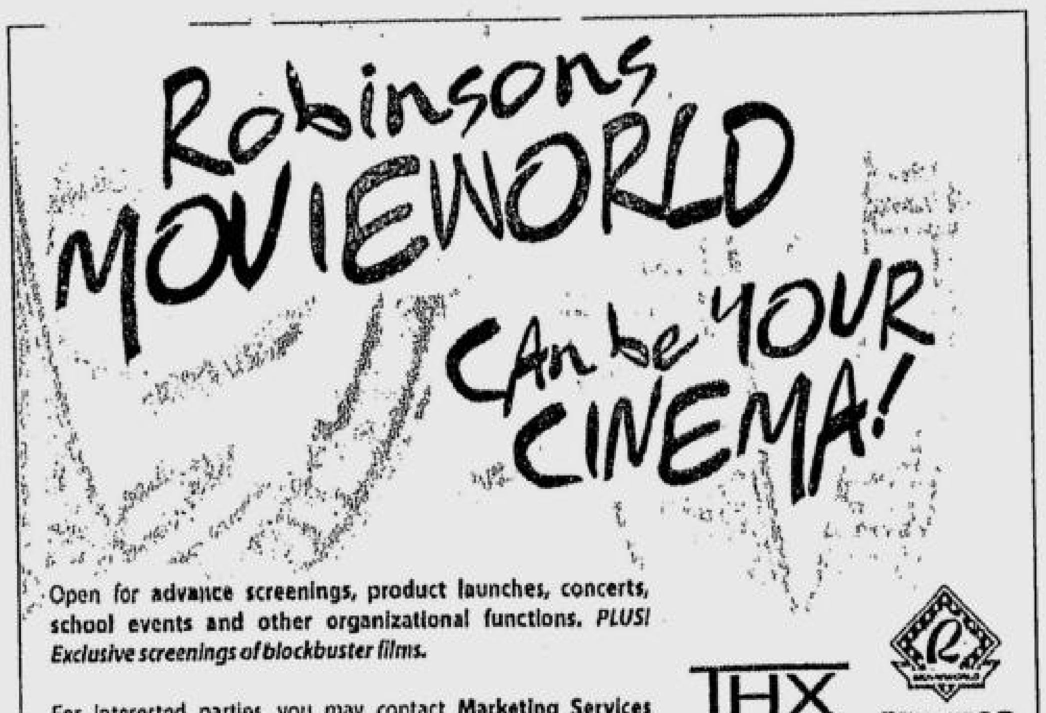
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Most awesome moments in entertainment

By Nestor U. Torre

THE ETC. CHANNEL recently telecast a special on the most memorable moments in entertainment in the United States: No. 10, Tom Cruise singing and dancing in his underwear in one of his early movies (!). No. 9, the Diana-Charles royal wedding as viewed on television.

No. 8, the fresh and wacky comedy in the hit sitcom, "Seinfeld." 7, Lucille Ball's "I Love Lucy" show—it's so funny that viewers still love it on its umpteenth replay, more than 50 years later!

6, Steven Spielberg's magical "E.T., The Extra-Terrestrial."

Fantasies

5, "Pretty Woman," starring Julia Roberts, a film that scored a direct hit on female viewers' fantasies, because it told the story of "a girl who finds her Prince Charming even if she's a hooker."

BRANDO. Quietly fearsome characterization in Francis Ford Coppola's "The Godfather."

SANTOS. Long and agonized "death dance" in Celso Ad. Castillo's "Burlesk Queen."

4, "Titanic" and its unique combination of love story, special effects and "shameless melodrama." 3, "The Godfather" and Marlon Brando's "quietly fearsome" characterization.

2, "Star Wars," especially the complex characterization of Darth Vader. And, at the top of the list, the Beatles' "historic" performing visit to the United States.

List

You may have your own US entertainment favorites, so let us know about them. For our part, we're adding our list of memorable moments in *Philippine* entertainment (in no particular order):

"Roberta," starring Tessie Agana, the film that literally rescued Sampaguita Pictures from the ashes of a huge fire that consumed the negatives in the studio's film vault.

Vilma Santos' long and agonized "death dance" in "Burlesk Queen."

The first film shot of the truly beautiful Amalia Fuentes, who won the "Miss Number One" beauty and talent search in the '60s.

Wacky

The winningly wacky early movie musical performances of Nida Blanca.

"Juan dela Cruz," Gerry de Leon's unfinished masterpiece, produced by and starring Fernando Poe Jr., featuring a memorable performance by Gloria Romero as Inang Bayan.

The huge hit that was Freddie Aguilar's "Anak."

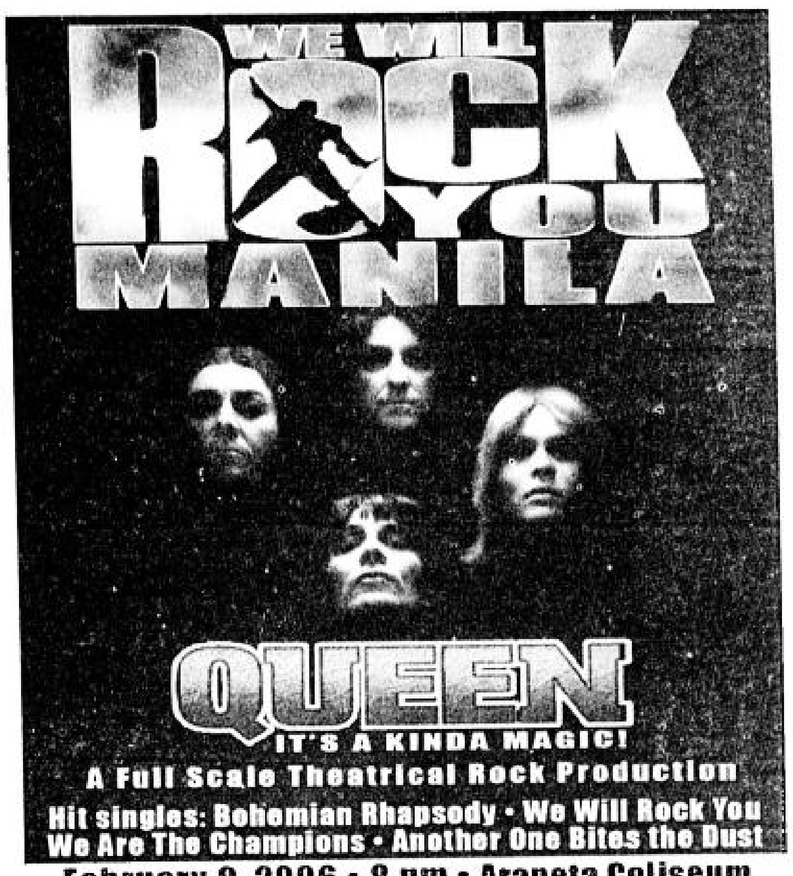
Lino Brocka and Clodualdo del Mundo Jr.'s "Maynila, Sa Mga Kuko ng Liwanag," deemed by some as the best Filipino movie ever made.

Nora Aunor as the title character in "Bona," a role that suited her perfectly.

Vic Silayan's amazingly complex performance as Alma Moreno's corruptor in "Ligaw na Bulaklak."

Rosa Rosal and Tony Santos Sr. in "Anak Dalita."

And, child sensation Niño Muhlach in his early starrers!



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Confessions of a belated techno-geek

By Behn Cervantes

AFTER MANY FAILED RELATIONSHIPS, I finally realized that, one, indeed, sleeps alone. As long as you learn to sleep well by yourself, you're better off without any sense of dependency on anything—or anyone! I dealt with smoking the same way. I merely threw away the pack and decided: No vice would control me!

I decided against dependency 15 years ago when, after a rancorous quarrel in the wee hours of the morning, I fitfully tried to sleep. All of a sudden, I heard my "enemy" snoring ever so loudly beside me. I sat in shock—and a rude awakening came: The quarrel had no emotional effect on my antagonist!

After breakfast, I asked my rested sleeper to pack up and leave. No more dependency, I forced myself to believe. I learned my lessons well. Or so I thought.

Greener pastures

I am rather "challenged" in the technological and mechanical fields. In fact, it took me ridiculously long to learn how to operate a video machine. My houseboy had to turn it on and off! But, when he left for greener pastures, I was forced to master the darned machine.

Of course, the steps were written down on paper which I followed ever so slowly. Since I hate reading directions, I had someone read them to me. To ascertain, that I could do it *sans* help, I would repeat the procedure four times.

It was the same thing with computers. But, as I have always proclaimed, I *am* a reincarnated ancient soul who's naturally used to medieval ways!

Like my friend NUT, that fine writer who still writes all his articles long-hand, I postponed owning a cell phone. Heck, if people want to talk to me, let them call me on the landline! Why the rush, I asked the hectic world?

Modern technology

However, the Edsa II rallies forced me to get one. In NUT's case, he has compromised by gifting his mom one. At 85, she is his connection to modern technology!

But, what a wonderful contraption the cell phone has turned out to be!

With a mere flex of a few fingers, I can almost instantly get in touch with friends here and abroad. Why, I can even send cute little messages on birthdays, Christmas and New Year. I have become dependent on the modern contraption!

Imagine my shock, then, when my cell phone was stolen last Dec. 30. Initially, I thought I had merely misplaced it—until I recalled the kid who kept bumping me on a crowded MRT ride!

Hopes

On New Year's Eve, I planned to text friends my good hopes for the Year of the Dog. No chance for *that* without the cell phone! I suddenly realized the enormity of my loss. How could I get the numbers of *Tita* Blit, Marichu M, Gloria D, Cesar M., Norma J, Orly M, Barbara P, Mon and Leni, Boots A. R., Tita M., Gari T., etc.? It will be a *long* process, I am sure!

Well, at least that gives me something to do this new year!

Choice new . . .

From page A2-1

Spanish), "Ave Maria," a Spanish version of Mariah Carey's "Hero," and a collaboration with Celine Dion, "I Believe in You" (in French).

Reason to rejoice

"American Idol" fanatics have reason to rejoice: Carrie Underwood and Bo Bice's respective debut albums, **"Some Hearts"** and **"The Real Thing,"** respectively, are finally out in the market.

While Underwood's 14-track album features country-tinged pop tracks (including "Wasted," "Don't Forget to Remember Me," "Jesus Take the Wheel" and the outstanding "I Just Can't Live a Lie"), Bice's 11-track collection is more pop than rock.

The versatile big-voiced singer proves that he can sing songs from any genre. Top tracks: "You're Everything," "Valley of Angels," "It's My Life" and the title track, "The Real Thing."

For his part, "Blue's" powerful tenor, **Lee Ryan**, has come out with his self-titled debut that showcases his steely pipes and enviable vocal range. The tracks, including the Blue-like soppy ballad, "Army of Lovers," may not be all that impressive, but the singer's voice is enough to merit a musical aficionado's attention.

Grammy-nominated tune

If you loved John Legend's outstanding Grammy-nominated tune, "Ordinary People," there's more to be had in **"Get Lifted,"** the gifted vocalist's 14-track album, which includes "Ordinary People," "Stay With You" and "Live It Up."

Another top singer-songwriter who deserves his spotlight is Eric Benet, Halle Berry's controversial ex-hubby. We have noted Benet's impressive voice and singing skills since "True to Myself," his auspicious 1996 debut. But, like Maxwell ("Whenever, Wherever, Whatever"), he has yet to truly break out into the big-time.

With his 14-song CD, **"Hurricane,"** it's about time he does!

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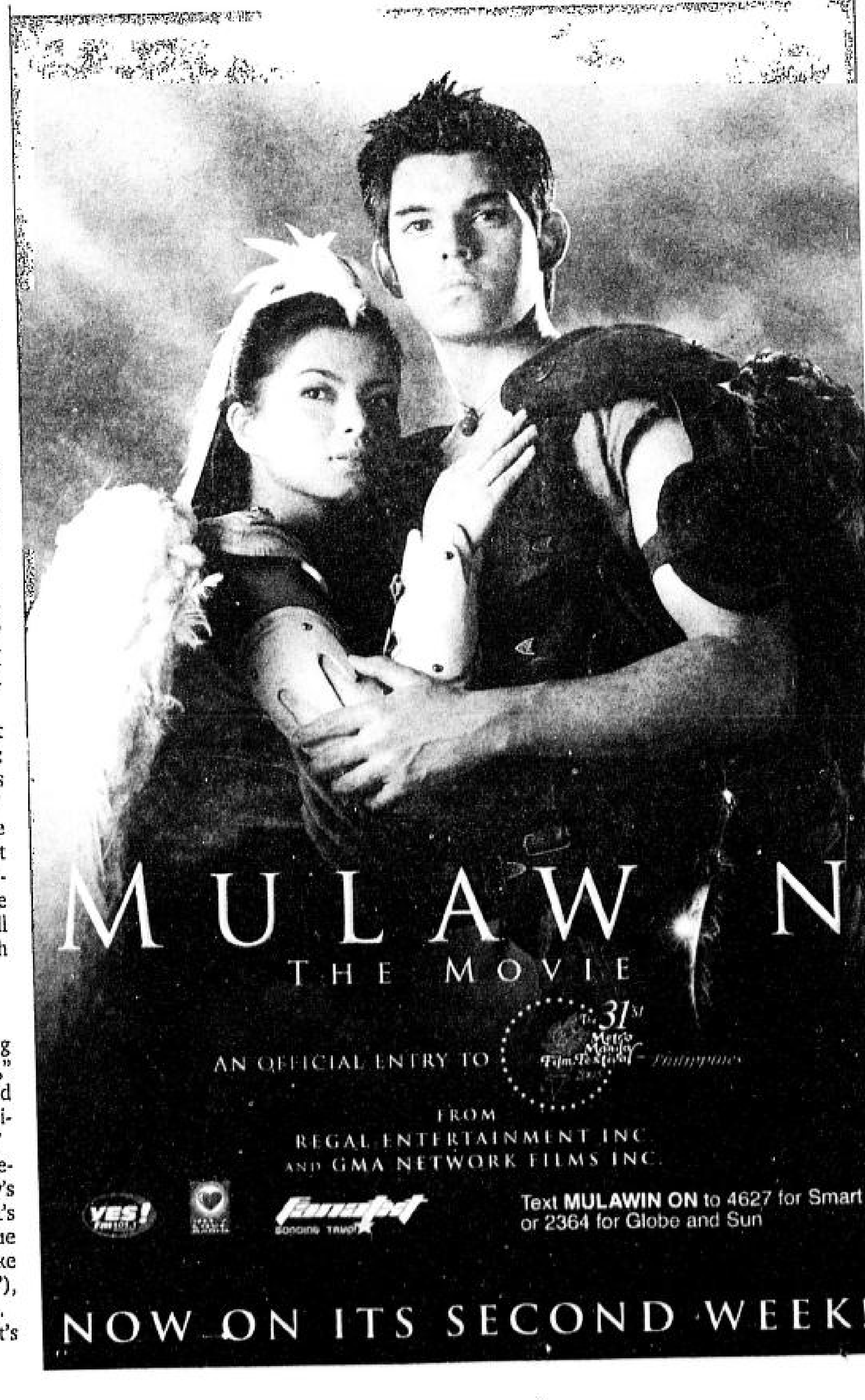

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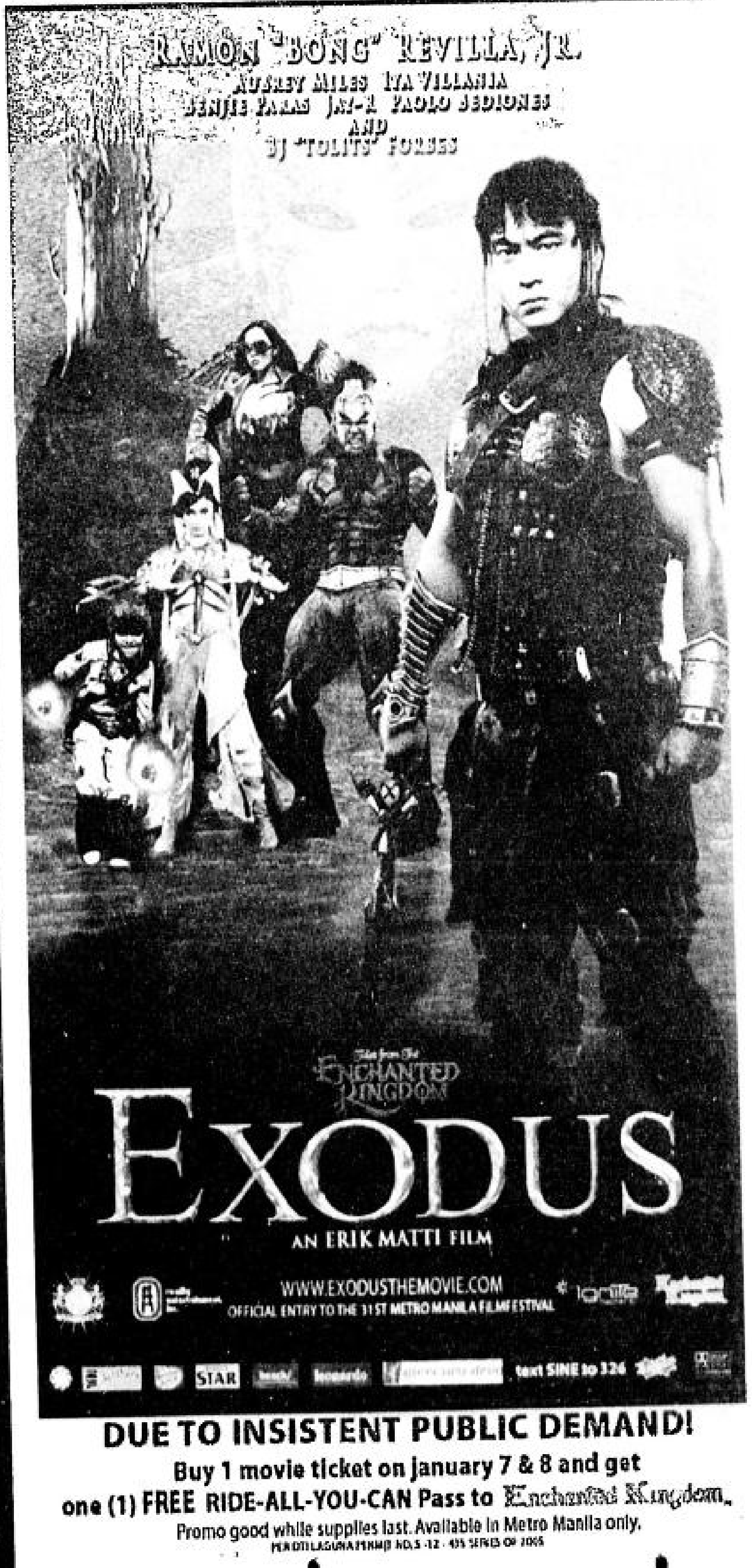

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Reinventing Philippine cinema

By Rica Arevalo

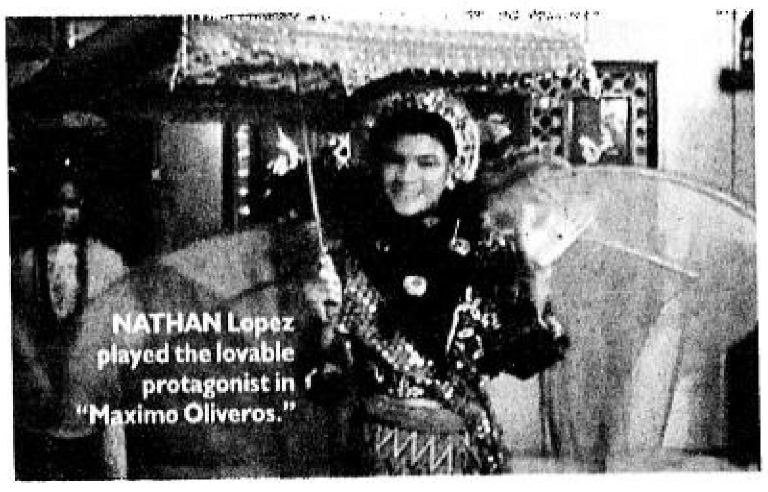
BACK IN 1995, WHEN THE Asian economic crisis hit the country, low-budget *pitu-pito* films became the industry's answer to resuscitate the "dying" movie industry. This was exacerbated by currency devaluation, dipping box-office returns, and prohibitive tax rates.

Problems

Philippine cinema continues to experience the same problems, and the number of local films produced has decreased. But, the advent of digital technology has allowed filmmakers to come up with innovative and daring films that are deemed "uncommercial" by mainstream producers.

For 2006, let's hope that the quality of movies and their stories would be on top of our filmmakers' priorities. Another wish is for filmmakers to venture into film distribution.

The success of Cinemalaya is a welcome development. It has inspired festivals like CinemaOne and Cinemanila to help develop new storytelling techniques, and to discover new and exciting filmmakers.


NATHAN Lopez played the lovable protagonist in "Maximo Oliveros."

Instructive

The success of "Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros" is instructive. More digital features are being invited to film festivals like Sundance and Berlin.

This augurs well for local films. The world will once again take notice of Philippine cinema.

Foreign programmers may still see us as a third-world nation, and look for films that center on the effects of poverty.

Even so, it's heartening to hear that Miramax, New Line and the Weinstein brothers are knocking on the doors of "Maxi" for distribution. *That's* a good start, indeed!

This year, we wish to see more of our reliable veteran actors on the big screen. For example, the two-minute participation of Anita Linda in "Ilusyon" reminded us of how much we've missed great but under-utilized actors.

And the list goes on.

Good citizenship

LACSON. Reminds us to pay attention to the little things.

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

I MET ALEXANDER LACSON AT Nelia Sarcol's new condo last November. He brought his 128-page book, "12 Little Things We Can Do to Help Our Country." Sarcol, founder of the Pearl Principle movement, bought 10 copies of the book.

Alex, a lawyer by profession, wrote the book in seven months. It details how we can love our country in specific, doable ways, and encourages every Filipino to do his part in nation building. It promotes the *bayanihan* spirit and patriotism.

Solution

Lacson considers good citizenship as a solution for our country's troubles. He said nation building is not just the duty of our leaders—it's also the responsibility of every Filipino citizen! We all have obligations to our country, and part of being a good citizen is to fight for good leaders and for a responsible government.

He reminds us to pay attention to the little things that we do, because they make up the big things.

We have to follow traffic rules, which is one way to gradually develop discipline. He quotes Benjamin Franklin: "Our people's habits can be the destiny of our nation."

Lacson also quotes Ninoy Aquino: "The Philippines, given a good leader, will become a great nation, because Filipinos, as people, are essentially good followers."

Abundance

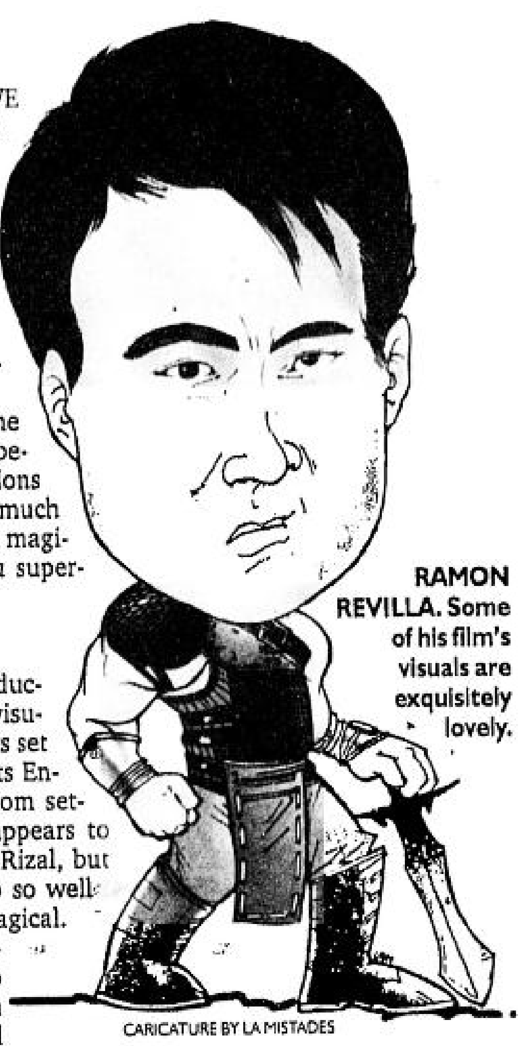
African countries like Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia are poor because they lack natural resources, something that we have in abundance. Among 200 countries, the Philippines is the fourth richest country in terms of mineral deposits. But, we are poor because of our own doing!

Once you've read "12 Little Things You Can Do to Help Our Country," you'll want to share it with friends. Call 911-2522 or 840-0338.

Email mandynavasero@yahoo.com, or call 899-1767.

Best special effects in MMFF fantasy festival

By Nestor U. Torre


RAMON REVILLA. Some of his film's visuals are exquisitely lovely.

CARICATURE BY LA MISTADES

SOME PROSPECTIVE viewers want to know: Which MMFF fantasy production has the best visual effects? We've seen "Exodus," "Mulawin" and "Enteng Kabisote 2" and can share these observations:

"Enteng" has the least striking visuals because its plot situations don't really require much more than the usual magical, battle or "*diwata* superpower" effects.

Magical

In fact, the production's most striking visuals are provided by its set design, specifically its Encantadia fairy kingdom setting. The location appears to be Daranak Falls in Rizal, but it's been spruced up so well that it looks really magical.

For its part, "Mulawin" appears to have spent much more on its digital effects, and its flying sequences are sometimes breathtaking.

The production gains more plus points because its storyline and themes are more substantial than those found in the two other movies. As a result, its visuals have a pertinent quality, and provide a visual corollary to the film's affecting themes.

But, "Mulawin" loses points due to its repetitive fight scenes. So, the production's "flying" effects soon lose their ability to excite.

Themes

As for "Exodus," it has a weaker storyline and themes than "Mulawin," but its visuals are generally more beautiful and impressive. Some of its shots are so exquisitely lovely that they conjure up emotions that are truly affecting.

Compelling, too, is the production's *range* of visual effects, from the epic to the intimate. This must have required a lot of money and creativity to pull off, so the viewer is properly grateful.

On the debit side, the production falters on point of fantasy character costuming and make-up, especially when it comes to the title character's "super-sidekicks."

Despite this flaw, however, all factors considered, it's "Exodus" that has the best visuals among the Metro filmfest's fantasy entries.

Edition

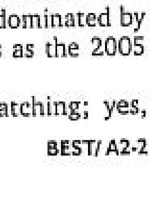
While we're glad that the Metro filmfest's fantasy flicks have enabled local cinematic special effects to finally come into their own, we hope that the 2006 MMFF won't be as dominated by fantasy productions as the 2005 edition has been.

Yes, kids are watching; yes,

BEST/ A2-2

Reflections

LOTUS POND



R. Valencia and S. Bismark

THE BEGINNING OF A YEAR IS A good time for reflection on one's aspirations. To inspire people to go deeper into introspection, we present words of wisdom from "Chinese Maxims: Golden Sayings of Chinese Thinkers," edited by Gong Dafei and Feng Yu:

"How difficult it is to understand a person who spends his days in gluttony and devotes himself to nothing!"

"He who is not determined will never acquire knowledge."

"Death is not as tragic as losing hope. Physical death is secondary to this."

"Even though a person is brave, he will bring himself harm if he does not have good intentions."

Determination

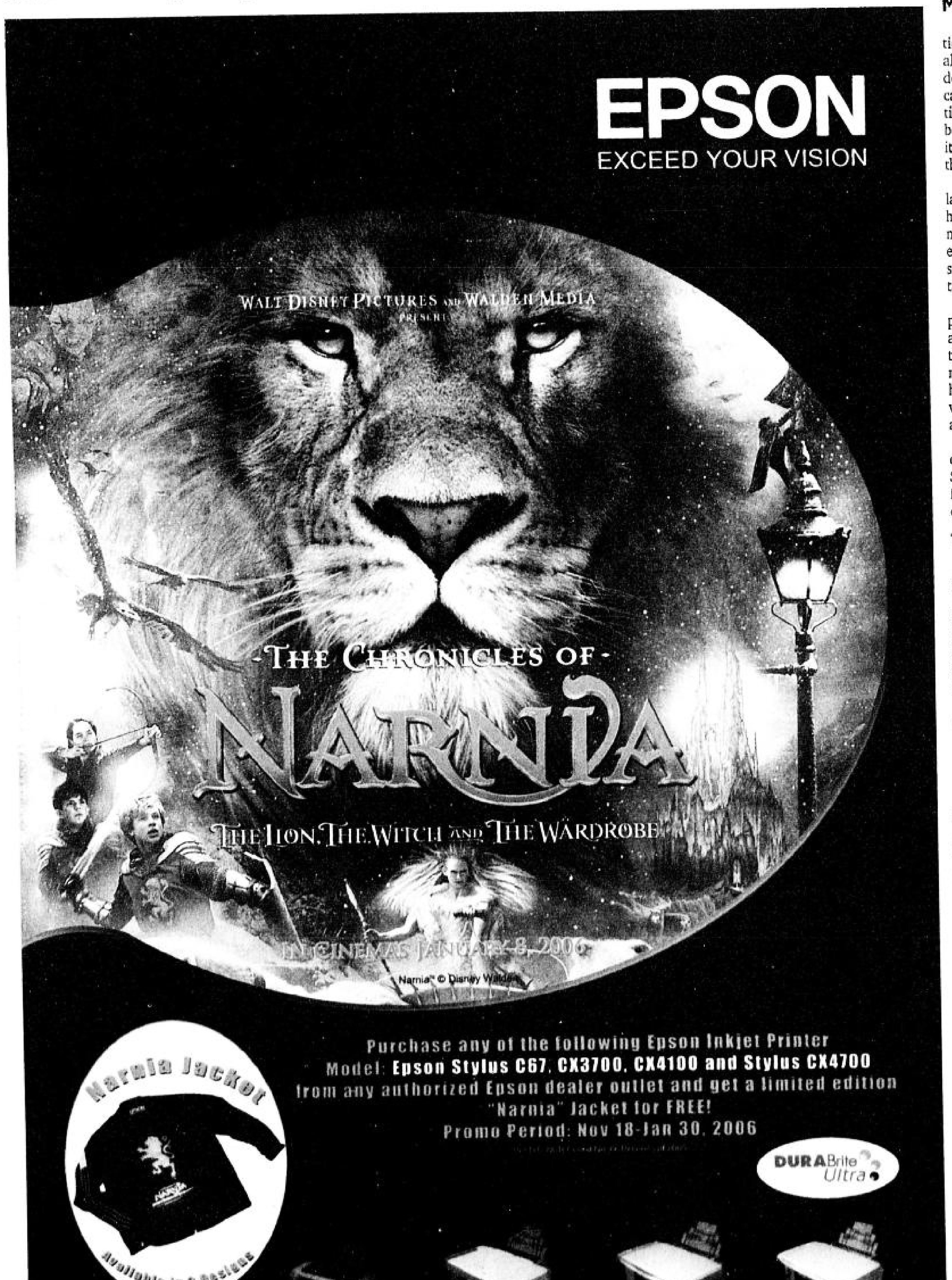
"Toil should inspire man's determination, *and* age should strengthen his spirit."

"Without exposure to great sayings, one will not develop great aspirations. Without exposure to correct opinions, one will not have a firm mind."

"Age should make a person stronger. Misfortune should make him more steadfast and not frustrate his lofty ambitions."

"Those who were called heroes in ancient times must have had a level of extraordinary self-control. When relationships get intolerable, the ordinary person, inflamed by his rage, will draw the sword and rise boldly for a duel. This cannot be considered courageous. People with extraordinary courage aren't moved when insults are suddenly hurled at them, nor will they rage when they are taunted. This is because they have loftier aspirations and greater ambition."

"A carefully written article is useless if it contains nothing instructive; an action that has been earnestly carried out is useless if it is meaningless."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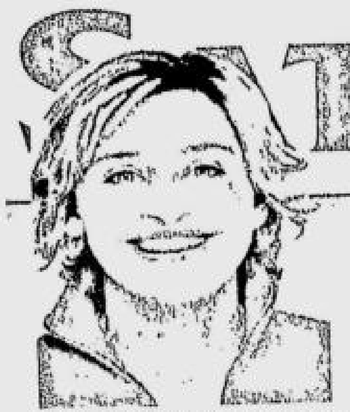

DEGENERES. No-nonsense and edgy.

Ellen Degeneres clicks as talk show host

By Nestor U. Torre

VIEWERS WHO'VE cut their TV teeth on Katie Couric and Oprah Winfrey could be thrown for a loop when they watch Ellen Degeneres' talk show on the new Second Avenue cable channel (Channel 53 on Sky Cable).

Unlike her veteran colleagues, Degeneres is a self-confessed lesbian. Now, *that* used to be a problem when it came to finding on-camera work on television. But, things have changed for the better, and Degeneres' success in the movies and on TV has enabled her to go mainstream, hence the carefully considered decision to give her a talk show of her own.

Sexuality

Even better, the host's sexuality isn't airbrushed away, so she's "allowed" to look, act and dress as herself, with a decided preference for mannish attire.

What's so unusual about that? Greta Garbo, Katharine Hepburn, Joan Crawford and Sharon Stone have all decked themselves out in mannish trousers and tuxes without being hauled off to jail by the Sex Police.

Well, daytime television is particularly leery of controversy, so it's quite a coup for Degeneres to clinch her own TV talkfest, while resolutely being herself.

This, by the way, is a sign not just of enlightenment on TV executives' part, but also of their business smarts. Controversy, as long as it's judiciously supervised, is good for a production's financial bottom line.

Sly reference

Degeneres is well aware of this, so she occasionally lets loose with a sly reference or winking comment that hints of her own liberated sexuality.

This is true whether her guest is female or male. When it's a woman who's come to visit, there's a little sensual electricity in the air, as Ellen joshingly flirts with her lovely guest.

When it's a man, the conversation becomes "guy talk," or else the male guest pretends to be gay, in winking reverse reference to Degeneres' own gender preference.

Style

Beyond sexuality, the show has a lot going for it, thank goodness. Degeneres' hosting style is no-nonsense and edgy, and that's all to the good, because it cuts through the icky sweetness and cuteness that often obfuscate daytime talk shows.

On the *other* hand, Degeneres' sense of humor is occasionally caustic and sarcastic, so it sours up some of her on-camera conversations.

Let's face it, most of her guests are simply trying to plug their latest starrers, so they don't want to put up with the host's sardonic cracks!

Degerenes does well at daytime, but her true TV calling might be in the late-late-late programming slot. That is, *if* she can stay awake that long!

Second chances

By Rito P. Asilo

NOW SHOWING

"Blue Moon"

D: Joel Lamangan
S: Eddie Garcia, Christopher de Leon, Dennis Trillo

A DIRECTOR IS ONLY as good—or as bad—as his last film. In Joel Lamangan's case, we've always found his movies thematically absorbing but, at the same time, his fills his oeuvre with a flurry of melodramatic excesses and narrative clutter.

ROA. Good acting isn't about length.

"Ako Legal Wife" is riotous fun and insouciantly campy—but, what does it *really* say? Like the protagonists of Gil Portes' clunky and confoundingly joyless comedy, "The Mourning Girls" (which wastes the spirited turns of Assunta de Rossi, Chin Chin Gutierrez and Cogie Domingo), it's about women who can't see beyond a man's chauvinistic, manipulative streak.

Yes, we know it's a comedy, but even comedies *could* say something meaningful.

On the other hand, while "Blue Moon," Lamangan's other filmfest entry, isn't without flaws, this sweet and inspiring film is nevertheless one of the director's most accomplished movies in years. As with his other productions, Lamangan cooks up a busy narrative brew, but in "Blue Moon," based on Allan Tijamo's Palanca-winning story, the elements come together:

When 83-year-old Manuel Pineda (Eddie Garcia) is diagnosed with terminal lymphoma, he—along with son, Rod (Christopher de Leon), and grandson, Kyle (Dennis Trillo)—embarks on the search of a lifetime.

Manuel looks for Corazon, the love of his life (and one of two namesake Corazons who have made his heart flutter). The road trip to Ilocus, Baguio, Bicol and Cebu doesn't just bring the trio together, it likewise gives them a chance to fix emotional estrangements and reconnect with one another.

Despite its schmaltz and technical flaws, Lamangan's film is galvanized by an earnest, heart-rending story, well-executed scenes, notable production design, and inspired performances from Garcia, De Leon, Trillo, Jennylyn Mercado and the production's theater-honed cast (notably Madeleine Nicolas).

And Boots Anson-Roa's short but moving participation proves that good acting isn't about length. In one of the best performances of her career, Roa helps the film find its emotional focus with her portrayal of the elderly Corazon. But, which Corazon is she? We're not saying...

"Blue Moon" is about second chances. As a young man, Manuel refused to dance with his beloved. But, when he's given a final stab at happiness, he grabs the chance to dance with his one true love!

SEN. PIMENTEL (left) and his wife, Bing (right), with Sison and Diaz.

Marco Sison, Jane Diaz topbill 'Pag-ibig sa Bayan'

By Andy Bais

ON JAN. 21, "PAG-IBIG SA BAYAN," Lourdes "Bing" Pimentel's musical drama on the country's Martial Law period, will be premiered at Meralco Theater. The musical is based on the book that Senator Aquilino "Nene" Pimentel Jr. is writing about his and his family's daunting experiences during Martial Law.

Documentaries

Unlike other productions on Martial Law, most of them TV documentaries, "Pag-ibig sa Bayan" opts to take a more personal view of that dark period in the country's history, stressing its effect on the lives of the members of one family, the Pimentels.

Bing Pimentel has penned beautiful songs, from love tunes to fervent patriotic anthems, to musically vivify the wide range of experiences and challenges that the Pimentels, including their six children, had to cope with during the four times that Nene was detained by the military on diverse, trumped-up charges.

When some of the songs were sung at the musical's press conference last Thursday, the press people present were very impressed with the beauty of their melodies and the pertinence and poetry of their lyrics, and hailed Bing as a major find in the field of songwriting.

Commitment

The songs were interpreted by Marco Sison, who portrays Nene, and Jane Diaz, who is cast as Bing in "Pag-ibig sa Bayan." The two leads expressed excitement and great commitment at having to play such exceptional characters who are involved in so many dramatic challenges in the course of the production's turbulent events.

They agreed with the musical's personal approach, because it brings the experience down to a human, empathetic level, and makes it easier for the audience to relate to the family's ordeal—and transformation.

Bing Pimentel was elated to hear the press people present reacting so positively to her songs.

For his part, the senator expressed the hope that "Pag-ibig sa Bayan" will remind all Filipinos, especially the youth, of one of the most challenging but eventually most triumphant chapters in the country's history.

Marco Sison is a popular singer and hit recording artist who is also involved in politics, having served as councilor of Biñan, Laguna for two terms. He is currently a provincial board member of Laguna.

First stint

Jane Diaz is a fine singer and actress, and a former member of the acclaimed Philippine Madrigal Singers. In 1997, she was awarded the University of the Philippines Gawad Chancellor for the Performing Arts. She had her first stint in musical theater only last year in Ryan Cayabyab's "Birhen ng Caysasay" musical, where she impressed audiences with her outstanding performing ability.

"Pag-ibig sa Bayan" will also be performed on Jan. 28 and Feb. 4 at Meralco Theater. Call Ruby at 851-3120 or Sara at 552-6783.

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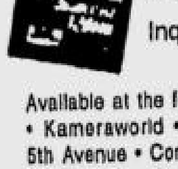

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Rise of 'disposable' stars deplored

MERCADO. Exception to the rule.

By Nestor U. Torre

AS THOUGH THE LOCAL entertainment scene weren't problematic enough, a new and worrisome trend has emerged that should concern us: The rise of the "disposable" star.

In the past, producers took their time discovering, training and building up starlets, in the hope that they would become durable stars who would act in hit productions for years—and even decades—to come.

This would enable the producers to recover their starmaking expenses, which could add up to a lot of money. But, the new stars would make the major investment worthwhile as they topbilled hit after hit for their perspicacious discoverers.

These days, however, new starlets are trotted out practically every month—but, just one year later, they're no longer around!

—Has-beens who were never-weres? Kleenex starlets? Xerox talents? The plot doesn't thicken, it deteriorates.

The way we see it, the rise of the "disposable" stars began with the *pitu-pito* sex flicks, for which daring and baring newcomers had to be "discovered" in nightclubs and other girlie joints.

After a movie or two, those daring but no-talent instant stars were junked in favor of even newer boldies—until the sex flick fad ground to a halt, partly because of the SM cineplex circuit's new "no-R-18" rule.

Overnight sensations

Then came the starlet searches on TV, like "Starstruck," which cannily used the strong starmaking power of television to turn absolute unknowns into overnight sensations.

After the new stars were launched, a few of them, like Jennylyn Mercado, survived and flourished, while most, like Hero Angeles, faded out of the screen for one reason or other.

In addition to the talent-search graduates, other male and female starlets have made it to the big and small screens in various ways. Alas, most of them look practically identical—they're young, *tisoy*, charming—but not really talented.

You see them "dancing" or "singing" as a group on TV shows, and it's a major chore to tell one young performer from another. Maybe they should wear name tags, so we can identify them?

Impact

Predictably, since they don't make an individual impact on viewers (aside from their diehard fans), many of these "cookie-cutter" talents are eventually replaced by another platoon of similarly goodlooking but talentless wonders.

That's how cynical the TV scene has become: It "discovers" fresh batches of new faces for adolescent and teen viewers to go ga-ga over for a few months, then disposes of many of them to make room for other fresh faces to keep fans in a dither for some more months.

We need talents to grow and mature on the local show biz scene, so the desultory cycle *must* end.

Reality . . .

From page A3-4

issue" out of it. One of the shows you can catch on the Second Avenue channel is "Cold Turkey," a reality show that aims to get people to stop smoking.

The scenario: Imagine, 10 people who think they've just entered the reality show of their dreams. One guy thinks he's going to design an underwear line, the other thinks she's going to be the queen of an island, another believes he's going to a NASA space camp, and so on. Get the picture?

Mansion

They meet up in a mansion and immediately start to smell something fishy.

At this crucial moment, in walks host A. J. Benza, who then proceeds to drop the bomb:

The participants are then told that they're on the show to kick a habit that is killing them!

At first, nobody's happy, but they soon decide they might as well join up, anyway. Non-smokers and non-smoking advocates will probably frown at their obtuseness (smoking is a major health risk, after all).

But, you have to make allowances for human nature—and besides, people who calmly accept things *don't* really make for "exciting" television, do they?

Encouraging

In the end, however—and with the help of encouraging videos from loved ones—they realize that going cold turkey will indeed benefit them.

Aside from that, there's also some cash to be had at the end of the rainbow, and people trying to quit smoking in the real world don't have *that* kind of inducement!

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EXODUS

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ENTENG KABISOTE 2
AKO LEGAL WIFE

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3 AKO LEGAL WIFE MTRCB PG-13 12:20, 2.45, 5:10, 7.35, 10.00
2 MULAWIN THE MOVIE MTRCB GP 12.00, 2.30, 5.00, 7 30 10:00
4 BLUE MOON MTRCB. GP 12.05, 2:30, 4:55, 7:20, 9:45
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CINEMA 5 AKO LEGAL WIFE - PG13 11:30, 1:50, 4:10, 6:30, 8:50
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AKO, LEGAL WIFE 2:10 / 4:40 / 7:10 / 9:40	EXODUS 2:10 / 4:40 / 7:10 / 9:40	BLUE MOON 12:30 / 2:40 / 5:00 / 7:20 / 9:40	AKO, LEGAL WIFE 1:30 / 4:00 / 6:30 / 9:00
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ENTENG KABISOTE 2 12:30 / 3:00 / 5:30 / 8:00	MULAWIN 12:35 / 3:05 / 5:35 / 8:05	KUTOB 12:35 / 3:05 / 5:35 / 8:05
EXODUS 12:55 / 3:25 / 5:55 / 8:25	AKO, LEGAL WIFE 12:55 / 3:25 / 5:55 / 8:25	DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

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GALLERIA 632-9116

1 AKO LEGAL WIFE • THX
12:55 3:15 5:35 7:55 10:00

2 EXODUS
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

3 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
12:15 2:45 5:15 7:45 10:00

4 KUTOB
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

5 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

6 MULAWIN the MOVIE
12:20 2:50 5:20 7:40 10:00

7 AKO LEGAL WIFE
12:25 2:45 5:05 7:25 9:35

8 BLUE MOON
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

9 THE MOURNING GIRLS
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

10 EXODUS
2:30 4:50 7:10

ERMITA 636-7809 to 12

1 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

2 AKO LEGAL WIFE
10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

3 MULAWIN the MOVIE
10:30 12:50 3:10 5:30 7:40 10:00

4 ENTENG KABISOTE 2

5 BLUE MOON
10:30 12:50 3:10 5:30 7:40 10:00

6 THE MOURNING GIRLS
10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

7 EXODUS
10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

METRO EAST 682-8193 / 682-8199

1 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL
1:40 4:00 6:20 9:00

2 EXODUS
12:20 2:40 5:00 7:20 9:30

3 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
12:10 2:30 4:50 7:10 9:20

4 MULAWIN the MOVIE
11:00 1:30 4:00 6:30 9:00

5 AKO LEGAL WIFE
10:45 1:20 3:55 6:30 9:05

6 ENTENG KABISOTE 2

7 BLUE MOON
11:00 1:30 4:00 6:30 9:15

8 EXODUS

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 935-3228-30

1 EXODUS
2 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL
3 EXODUS
4 BLUE MOON
5 MULAWIN the MOVIE
6 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
7 AKO LEGAL WIFE
8 ENTENG KABISOTE 2

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2 EXODUS
3 RESERVE
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2 THE MOURNING GIRLS
3 EXODUS
4 MULAWIN

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2 EXODUS
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
4 MULAWIN the MOVIE
5 EXODUS

DASMARINAS (046) 852-2126 / (046) 416-4332

1 MULAWIN the MOVIE
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
3 THE MOURNING GIRLS
4 BLUE MOON
5 LAGOT KA SA KUYA KO

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2 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
3 AKO LEGAL WIFE
4 MULAWIN the MOVIE

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5 SHAKE, RATTLE AND ROLL
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3 BLUE MOON
4 EXODUS
5 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
6 MULAWIN the MOVIE

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1 KING KONG
2 EXODUS
3 MULAWIN the MOVIE
4 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
5 AKO LEGAL WIFE
6 SHAKE, RATTLE and ROLL

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2 BLUE MOON
3 EXODUS
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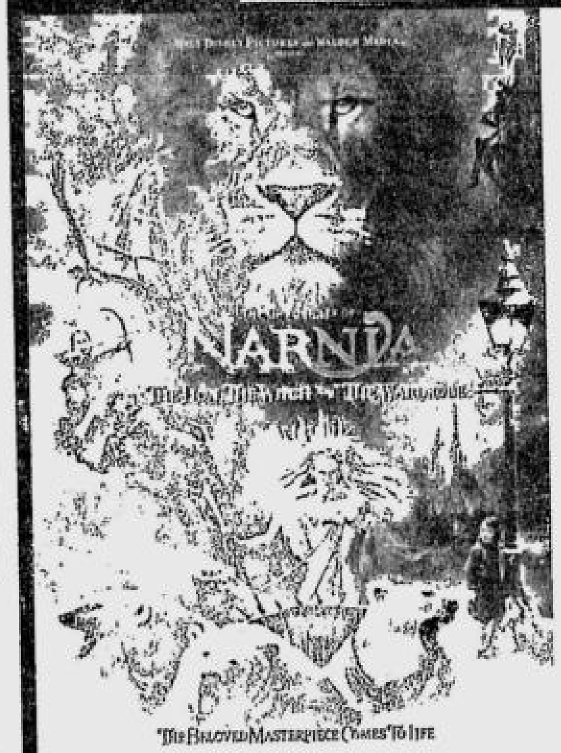
G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 AKO LEGAL WIFE	2 ENTENG KABISOTE 2	3 BLUE MOON	4 EXODUS
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 AKO LEGAL WIFE	2 MULAWIN	3 THX BLUE MOON GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 MOURNING GIRLS	5 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL	6 ENTENG KABISOTE 2	7 EXODUS
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 AKO LEGAL WIFE	2 KUTOB		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX BLUE MOON GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX AKO LEGAL WIFE GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 EXODUS GUARANTEED SEATS	4 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL GUARANTEED SEATS	5 MULAWIN GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX ENTENG KABISOTE 2	2 BLUE MOON		
	3 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL	4 AKO LEGAL WIFE	5 MULAWIN	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 ENTENG KABISOTE 2	2 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL	3 EXODUS	4 MULAWIN



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Reality show for smokers

By Noelani Torre

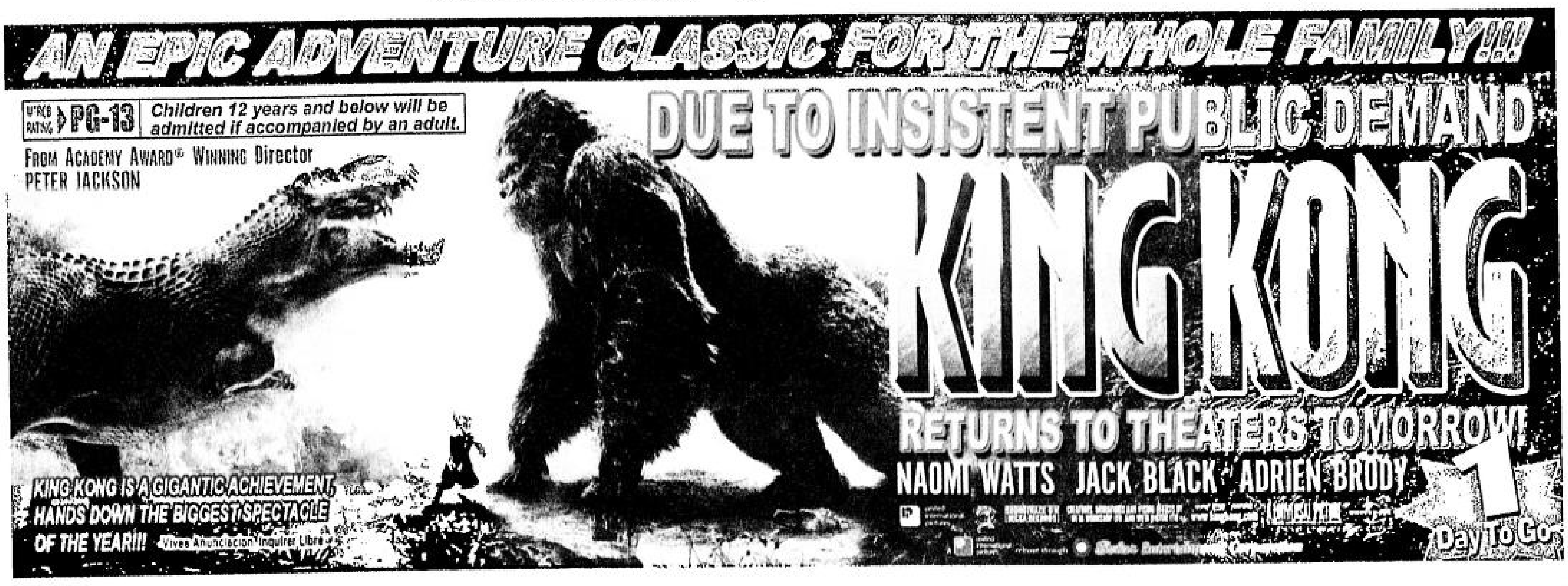
WHAT WILL THEY think of next? That's the thought that runs through our minds when we see another outrageous or bizarre television show.

Scramble

Now that reality TV has been invading our screens with a vengeance, producers have been tripping over themselves in the scramble to come up with newer ideas to make real people do things that they think televiewers want to see.

Recently, they've even made a "health

REALITY/ A3-2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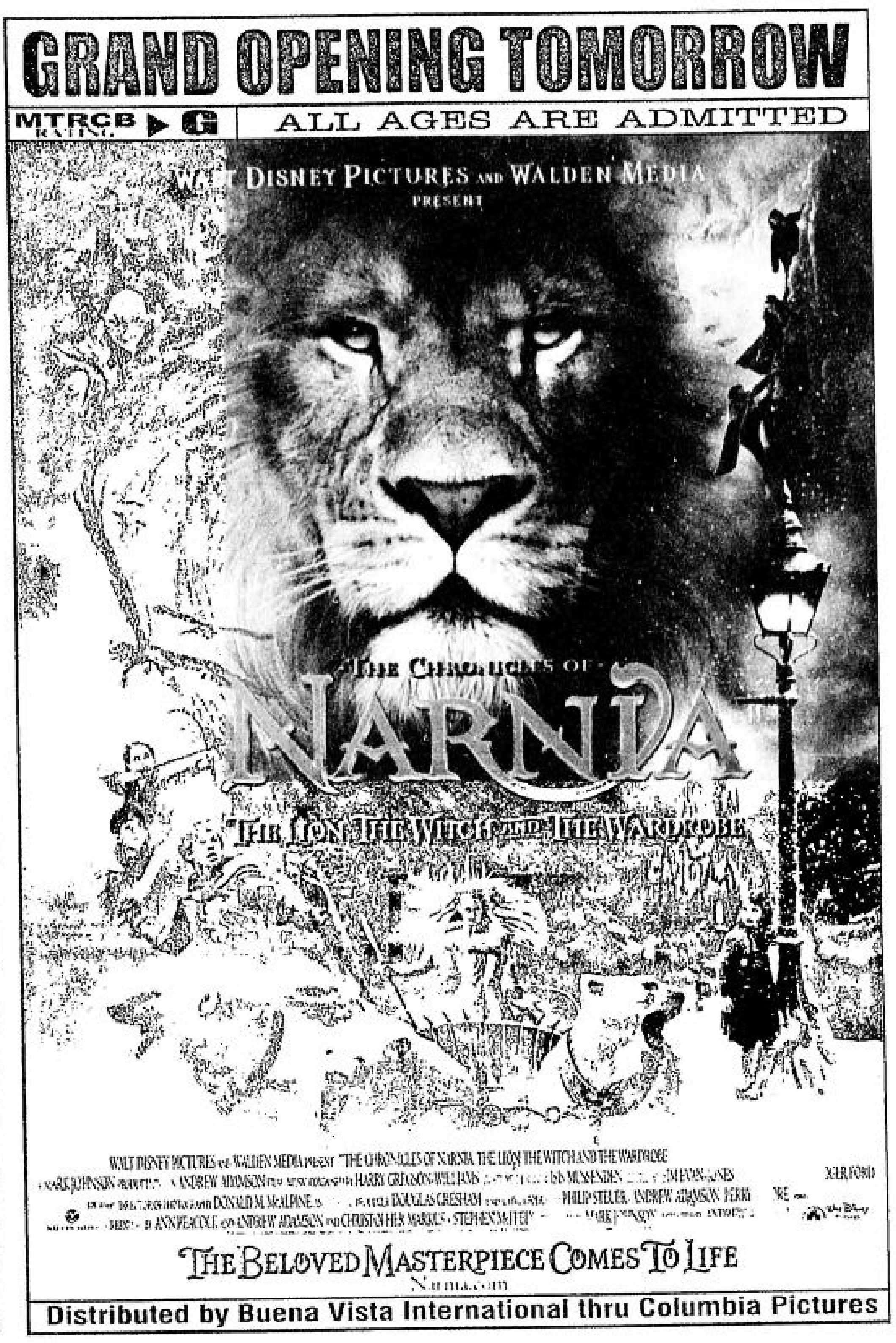
GRAND OPENING TOMORROW
MTRCB RATING G
ALL AGES ARE ADMITTED
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Narnia.com
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Beautiful Boxer
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WHAT'S INSIDE

SM to put up third mall in China /B2

'05 hot money inflows surge to $2.1B /B3

Permanent tax relief for wage earners sought /B3

BUSINESS

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Editor Raul O. Marcelo
Assistant Editor Corrie S. Narisma

Banco de Oro proposes merger with EPCIB

'Merger of equals' seen creating RP's 2nd biggest bank

By Doris C. Dumlao and Elizabeth L. Sanchez

RETAIL TYCOON HENRY SY'S BANCO DE ORO UNIVERsal Bank yesterday proposed to merge with the country's third biggest lender, Equitable PCI Bank.

The SM group, now the single biggest stockholder in EPCIB with a 34-percent stake accumulated from the open market and the buyout of the Go family last year, requested the EPCIB board to evaluate the offer until this Jan. 31.

BDO disclosed to the Philippine Stock Exchange that it would like to swap up to 1.6 of its shares for every EPCIB share. Based on BDO's closing price of P35.50 yesterday, the offer price was about P56.80 for each EPCIB share against the latter's closing of P63.

"A bigger and stronger bank will ultimately be beneficial to the entire banking system and the banking public," BDO said.

As a second option, BDO also offered to base the swap ratio on the book values of both banks to be assessed by an independent accounting firm using International Accounting Standards.

But to consummate this "merger of equals" that could create the country's second biggest lender with combined assets of about P500 billion, BDO needs consent from 67 percent of EPCIB's shareholders, which also include state-owned pension funds Social Security System (with a 29-percent stake), the Government Service Insurance System (14 percent) and the Romualdez family (8 percent).

In a press briefing yesterday, BDO president Nestor Tan said the banks' stockholders would benefit from the transaction through an improvement in earnings from synergies, a potential ap-

BANCO/ B2

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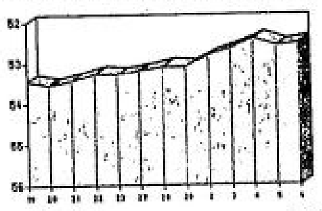

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P 52.52 = $1

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¥ 116.10 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Jan. 6, 2006

GOLD: $527.80-528.30

per ounce Hong Kong, Jan. 6, 2006

STOCK MARKET

Stocks down on profit-taking

STOCKS DECLINED YESTERday as investors cashed in on three sessions of gains, traders said.

STOCKS/ B3

Businessmen see economy growing by 4-4.5%

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE PHILIPPINE CHAMBER OF COMmerce and Industry yesterday said the business community was optimistic about the economy's performance this year although it expects a growth rate lower than the government's projection of 4.8 percent.

PCCI chair Miguel B.Varela, who is also chair of the Employers Confederation of the Philippines, said businesses believed the economy, as measured by the gross domestic product (GDP), would growth by 4 to 4.5 percent in 2006.

Varela said the country's fiscal situation would continue to be the key factor in fueling the country's growth and that ensuring medium-term fiscal sustainability remained to be the main policy challenge for the administration.

"With the implementation of the (reformed) value-added tax, we expect that substantial revenues would be raised that would help stabilize the country's fiscal condition," he said.

"The government could complement the measures to raise revenues with efforts to rationalize fiscal spending," he added.

Varela said business leaders also expected that the stock market and the peso would remain upbeat due to the anticipated initial public offerings of big firms like GMA-7 as well as the projected increase in private consumption and remittances from overseas Filipino workers.

However, the PCCI chair said further growth of the economy needed for its foundation political stability, consistent fiscal policies and revenue generation activities, good governance and a strong drive against corruption, sustained reform of the power sector and development of infrastructure, and stable prices of petroleum products.

Still, he said the business community

BUSINESSMEN/ B3

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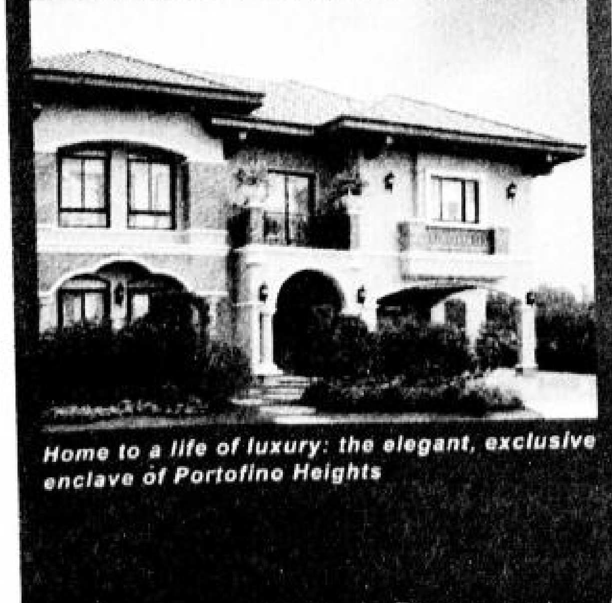
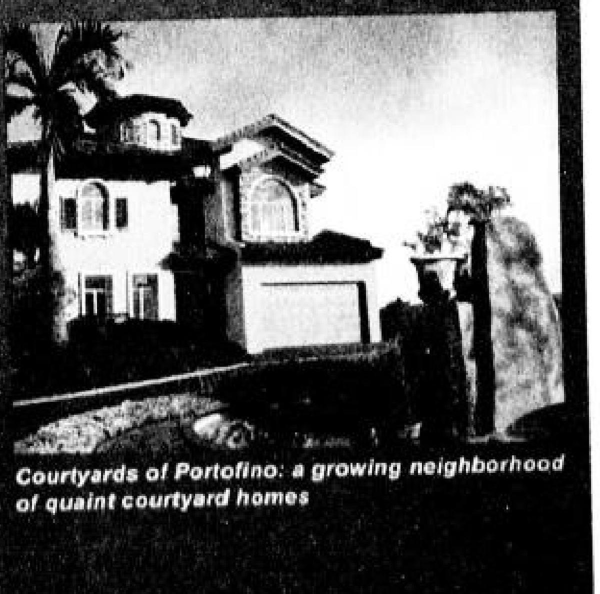

Home to a life of luxury: the elegant, exclusive enclave of Portofino Heights

Gateway to the masterplanned Italian masterpiece development of Portofino

Portofino's Roman bath-inspired pool: one of the amenities enjoyed by residents today


Courtyards of Portofino: a growing neighborhood of quaint courtyard homes

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SM to put up third mall in China

Retail giant Wal-Mart eyed anew to operate commercial complex

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

MALL TYCOON HENRY SY, SR. IS SET TO build his third mall in Chengdu province in China this year, industry sources said.

The mall—which will span between 180,000 to 200,000 square meters—is expected to be completed in 2007. The SM group is again looking at retail giant Wal-Mart to operate the new commercial complex. Wal-Mart is presently running SM's other two malls in China.

Sy has expanded quietly in China, opening his second mall in Fujian province late last year.

The 165,000-square meter Fujian mall is located in Jin Jiang City, lying on the southeast coast of one of the world's largest economies.

The Sy family in 2003 opened its first 120,000-square meter shopping mall on Crossroad West in Xiamen.

Sy's daughter and SM heiress Teresita Sy earlier said that the SM group would continue to study whether it would fold in its private ventures in China into its publicly listed SM Prime Holdings.

"We have to study it, whether we should (fold it into SM Prime) because the China project is very new, we have to make sure it would bring in income before we fold it in," she said.

SM Prime is the country's largest mall operator with 21 commercial complexes scattered across the nation.

The malls' total gross floor area measures 2.7 million square meters.

SM Prime in late February will open the Mall of Asia, its most ambitious project to date.

The mall sits on a 60-hectare property overlooking Manila Bay.

Mall of Asia is set to become not just the country's biggest, but also the most complete and innovative, shopping complex.

The 381,000-square-meter complex consists of four buildings linked by elevated walkways.

These buildings will feature a wide array of stores and venues for dining, entertainment, leisure, arts and culture.

The main mall will include shopping and dining establishments, a food court, and the country's first Olympic-sized ice skating rink.

The north parking building will also house the SM Department Store and half of the 5,000-car parking space, while the south parking building will have the SM Hypermarket and more dining areas.

The mall's newest attraction is the Entertainment Plaza. Aside from bowling and billiards facilities, the building will house 10 theaters, including a Director's Club and the country's first Imax theater.

Sin in the clowns

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

IN MY HOME LAST SEPTEMBER AND October, we saw a miracle. Our electricity bills for those months went down for the first time in a long while.

It was a miracle to me because, at that time, the international prices of oil (i.e. fuel for electricity plants) were threatening to go up to another galaxy.

And so I patted myself on the back, thinking that we were able to cut our electricity bills because everybody in the house practiced ... well, "energy conservation."

For that was the only solution of this cute administration of Gloriaetta to the prohibitive prices of fuel and power (and thus everything else) at that time.

They told us to sacrifice a bit. Conserve energy, they said. It meant that we should tighten our belts, although many of us could not even afford to buy belts anymore.

***

ALL RIGHT, if "energy conservation" meant that only those immense shopping malls could turn on their huge aircon units, while we should suffer at home, so be it.

At least we could help this country survive the worldwide "energy crisis."

Unfortunately, I found out the real reason for the cut in my household electricity bills for those two particular months. You know what? It was not "energy conservation."

On national television one afternoon, you see, Gloriaetta herself told us the good news of our salvation from high electricity rates.

Perhaps to earn some "cute" points, she proudly announced that, for the month of September, power rates would go down by 23 centavos per kilowatt-hour, and for the month of October, they would go down by another 8 centavos.

And so what was the specific measure undertaken by the Department of Energy, under this cute administration, to lower the rates even only for two months?

Perhaps we could adopt them permanently, so that we could enjoy the lower rates for the rest of our lives, yes?

***

SORRY, it was not like that at all! For it turned out that the measure proudly announced by Gloriaetta was only a temporary one.

It was only the closure, for the meantime, of the power plants owned by our beloved government-owned Napocor.

I am not kidding! Based on the gospel according to Gloriaetta, for us to enjoy lower electricity rates, this cute administration merely had to shut down Napocor plants.

***

AT THAT time, you see, Napocor had to undergo maintenance work on its power plants for about two weeks. You know—things like repairs, equipment checks and such!

It meant that Napocor would have to close down its plants, forcing electricity retail companies like Meralco and electric cooperatives to buy electricity from somewhere else.

In the case of Meralco, it has been buying about 55 percent of the electricity it resold to us, the end-users, from Napocor.

Because of the Napocor maintenance work, Meralco had to buy 83 percent of its electricity requirement from the so-called IPPs, or the independent power producers, which were all private corporations.

That, actually, was the real reason why my electricity bills went down—miraculously indeed—last September and October.

For only two weeks, Meralco did not have to buy a lot of electricity from the government corporation Napocor.

Meralco was simply allowed to buy electricity—for redistribution to its customers—from private power plants, and not from our beloved Napocor.

For only two weeks, at that! Resulting in lower rates for TWO months! Imagine that.

So what more if this country can do away with Napocor for good?

***

NOW, somebody apparently wrote a memo to Malacañang, urging this cute administration of Gloriaetta to take over Meralco.

That somebody was said to be a top executive of Napocor.

Thus, talk immediately went around, pointing at the Napocor mafia (which had been lobbying Congress to do away with the Napocor privatization) as the instigator of the memo.

Also, word in business circles had it that this cute administration was about to get even with the Lopez group, which partly owns and runs Meralco.

It was said that the group quietly supported the oust-Gloriaetta movement a while back. The Meralco takeover thus was supposedly the payback of this cute administration to the Lopez group's treachery.

And so the propaganda peddled to us by the memo, as enunciated by Palace officials, had nothing to do with revenge.

The Palace simply told us that the government takeover of Meralco would result in lower power rates. Whaaat?

And everybody thought that, only a couple of months ago, this cute administration was able to lower the power rates, simply because the government (care of Napocor) had to close down its plants for the meantime.

And then all of a sudden, here come the Napocor clowns, telling us in a memo the exact opposite, denying in effect the sin of Napocor behind the high power rates in this country, which happen to be the second highest in all of Asia.

Please, somebody tell me how do you run a country under schizophrenic governance.

Gokongwei firm to offer $200-M in 5-year notes

THE JG SUMMIT GROUP OF BUSINESS tycoon John Gokongwei will repay some of its debts amounting to $100 million due in February.

The Gokongwei group will be raising the fund through its offshore subsidiary.

JGSH Philippines Ltd., a wholly owned offshore subsidiary of JG Summit Holdings, will issue five-year fixed rate notes worth around $200 million.

Credit Suisse First Boston (Europe) Limited had been engaged as the lead manager for the notes offering, JG Summit said in a disclosure.

According to sources, a portion of the funds to be raised from the notes offering will be used for "general corporate purposes."

JG Summit Holdings, the flagship firm of the Gokongwei family, has been named as the guarantor of the notes.

The timetable for the offering has yet to be announced. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

Power spot market set to open

By Abigail L. Ho

THE WHOLESALE ELECTRICITY SPOT MARket is prepared to start commercial operations by Jan. 20, or as soon as the Energy Regulatory Commission approves its price determination methodology (PDM) and market fees.

Lasse Holopainen, president of Wesm market operator Philippine Electricity Market Corp. (PEMC), said the electricity bourse could go live even with just a 15-minute notice by Jan. 20.

"That's how ready we are. But the regulator has to approve the PDM and the market fees," he said in a briefing yesterday.

Similar to the stock market, the WESM allows trading of electricity among power users, including power producers, distribution utilities and other large power consumers.

Apart from the ERC approvals, he said PEMC would also have to get the Department of Energy's nod before it starts operations.

PEMC submitted its PDM application to the ERC last September. The regulatory body, however, sought additional documents from the market operator.

The WESM's PDM will be the basis for calculating prices in the electricity spot market. Instead of pegging prices on specific peso values, the PDM will serve as a formula for computing how much electricity should be priced within a certain hour.

Another aspect of the electricity bourse that the ERC had yet to approve was PEMC's market fees application, which the market operator submitted last Nov. 14.

Registered participants in the market trials represent more than 10,000 megawatts (MW) of generation and 5,000 MW of demand from power distributors and other large electricity users.

These include independent power producers Mirant Philippines Corp., Kepco Philippines Corp. and First Gas Power Corp.; power distributor Manila Electric Co.; and state firms National Transmission Corp. and Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp.

Market trials in the Visayas grid also started last month in preparation for full commercial operations by June next year.

Banco de Oro proposes merger with EPCIB

From page B1

preciation in the stock price with the increase in market capitalization and enhanced franchise value.

The merged entity is also expected to yield cost savings and higher revenue, and an upgrade in its credit standing.

In particular, Tan said a merger would consolidate the strengths of BDO and EPCIB in consumer lending and result in a dominant player in middle market lending and a market leader in remittance volumes, branch banking, trust and corporate banking with the combined network of 685 branches.

Under BDO's offer, Tan stressed that there was no need for EPCIB shareholders to spend anything to effect a merger.

BDO is the sixth biggest in terms of resources with P212.3 billion. It is the 8th strongest in terms of capital with P18.8 billion.

SSS president and EPCIB vice chair Corazon dela Paz said the EPCIB management would hire a financial adviser to study BDO's offer. Asked whether the SSS was supporting the merger plan, Dela Paz said a decision would be made after the study has been completed.

"If the study shows it's a good deal for us, then we'll go ahead if there's no other investment alternative," Dela Paz said in an interview yesterday.

"As directors, we have to evaluate what is good for the bank, to make it stronger," she said, noting that SSS was no longer the single biggest stockholder in EPCIBank.

EPCIB chair Ferdinand Martin Romualdez, who is still in the United States, yesterday said in a separate interview that BDO's proposal would have to be thoroughly reviewed.

"This has to be discussed for the mutual benefit of all shareholders," Romualdez said.

Tan also said that a three-way merger with China Banking Corp., which is majority controlled by the SM group, was also possible, but not a priority at this time.

The SM group bought out the Go family's 180 million shares representing a 24.76-percent stake in EPCIB for P56.50 each share last year.

The group has an offer to acquire the 29-percent stake owned by the SSS, but this is still pending in court after a group of retirees opposed the negotiated sale. The SM group wanted to buy the SSS stake at P43.50 a share or P8 billion, but is willing to improve its offer should the courts uphold the deal with the SSS.

The merger offer did not come as a surprise as BDO had always been vocal about its plan to merge with EPCIB.

"In terms of market capitalization, the merged institution will move up to large-capitalization category, defined as companies with market capitalization of at least $700 million," BDO said in its disclosure.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Jan. 6, 2006)

Stocks	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	30,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	35.5	36	35	35.5	2,737,600
Bank of the Phil. Islands	57	57	55	55	907,800
China Banking Corp.	610	615	610	610	665,090
Citystate Savings Bank	19	19	19	19	600
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	61	63.5	61	63	549,100
International Exch. Bank	20.25	20.5	20.25	20.5	59,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	33	34	33	34	5,030,900
Philippine National Bank	32.5	33.5	32.5	33	84,900
Phil. Savings Bank	35	35	35	35	1,900
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	14	14	14	14	12,500
Security Bank Corp.	34.5	34.5	34.5	34.5	13,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	31.5	31.5	31.5	31.5	22,800
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2130	2140	2130	2140	2,410
Ivantage Corp.	0.62	0.62	0.62	0.62	1,190,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	53	53.5	52.5	52.5	712,900
Manila Electric Co. A	14.25	14.5	14.25	14.5	36,600
Manila Electric Co. B	22.5	22.5	22	22.25	337,300
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	1,358,000
Petron Corp.	4.7	4.7	4.55	4.6	3,282,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.72	1.72	1.72	1.72	46,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	20,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	110,000
CADP Group Corp.	1	1	1	1	20,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	23.5	23.5	23.5	23.5	25,200
Jollibee Foods Corp.	41	41	40.5	40.5	103,700
Pancake House Inc.	3.65	3.65	3.65	3.65	10,000
RFM Corp.	0.74	0.74	0.74	0.74	50,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	300,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	100,000
San Miguel Corp. A	64	64.5	64	64.5	61,000
San Miguel Corp. B	89	89	88	88	808,000
Universal Robina Corp.	20.25	20.5	20.25	20.5	6,500
Vitarich Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	350,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.32	0.34	0.32	0.34	1,990,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.76	0.78	0.76	0.76	2,610,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.4	4.5	4.4	4.5	650,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	100,000
CHEMICALS					
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.71	0.71	0.7	0.7	130,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Panasonic Mfg Phil Corp.	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	4,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	10,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	47,000,000
Ayala Corp.	327.5	335	327.5	330	324,040
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43	40,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.85	4.9	4.85	4.9	46,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.023	0.023	0.023	0.023	3,000,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.14	2.14	2.14	2.14	278,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.86	0.86	0.84	0.86	810,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	9	9	9	9	271,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.18	1.2	1.16	1.16	10,109,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3.25	3.25	3.15	3.2	2,207,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	10,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.24	1.26	1.24	1.24	420,000
JG Summit Holdings Inc.	3.65	3.7	3.6	3.65	526,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.19	0.19	210,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	10,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	900,000
SM Investments Corp.	242	242	241	241	271,500
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	2,500,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	10.5	10.5	10.25	10.25	5,665,200
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	100,000
Belle Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.04	1.04	3,989,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.175	0.175	0.175	0.175	160,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	192,000
C&P Homes Inc.	2.08	2.08	2.08	2.08	200,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.23	0.23	0.225	0.225	2,280,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.26	0.33	0.24	0.24	4,290,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.44	0.44	8,710,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.71	0.71	0.7	0.7	200,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.46	1.46	7,987,000
Interport Res.	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	10,000,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.21	0.21	0.2	0.2	1,610,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	510,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.4	1.42	1.38	1.42	6,601,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.37	0.37	0.36	0.37	31,710,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	200,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.145	0.145	0.145	0.145	100,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.14	0.14	0.135	0.135	1,170,000
SM Development Corp.	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	100,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.1	8.2	8	8	6,928,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	200,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	13	13	13	13	2,500
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	1.52	1.52	1.52	1.52	2,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.95	0.95	0.93	0.94	1,680,000
Globe Telecom Inc	755	765	750	755	91,120
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.6	3.6	3.55	3.6	1,184,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1845	1850	1820	1820	45,860
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Ionics Inc.	1.1	1.16	1.1	1.14	57,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.049	0.05	0.049	0.05	1,400,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.05	0.05	0.049	0.05	4,200,000
Philweb Corp.	0.015	0.015	0.014	0.015	34,100,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp	1.66	1.66	1.64	1.66	67,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	9.6	9.8	9.6	9.8	1,267,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.76	0.76	0.76	0.76	50,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	100,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.46	1.46	1.44	1.46	113,000
Manila Jockey Club	2.7	2.9	2.7	2.9	57,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	360,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.28	780,000
EDUCATION					
Centro Escolar University	9	9	9	9	5,000
Ipeople Inc.	3.15	3.15	3.05	3.05	126,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Jardine Davies Inc	18.5	19.5	18.5	19.5	2,400
Macroasia Corp.	1.4	1.42	1.4	1.42	165,000
Paxys Inc.	6.3	6.3	6.2	6.2	825,000
MINING & OIL					
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.96	0.97	0.96	0.97	600,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	50,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	1,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	5.7	5.7	5.6	5.7	753,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.52	1.54	1.52	1.54	30,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.22	0.225	0.215	0.215	830,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.25	0.26	0.25	0.25	10,080,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.028	0.028	0.028	0.028	2,100,000
Omico Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	7,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	1.38	1.38	1.36	1.36	1,301,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.86	1.9	1.86	1.88	7,441,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	27.5	27.5	27.5	27.5	197,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.24	0.26	0.24	0.26	930,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.185	0.19	0.185	0.19	1,660,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	100,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	10,000,000
PREFERRED					
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Q	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series R	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series S	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	13	13.25	13	13	1,774,300

CURRENCIES

January 6, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.826105	1.000000	52.4690
Japan	Yen	0.007130	0.008631	0.4529
United Kingdom	Pound	1.449649	1.754800	92.0726
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.106553	0.128982	6.7676
Switzerland	Franc	0.647468	0.783760	41.1231
Canada	Dollar	0.710750	0.860363	45.1424
Singapore	Dollar	0.501917	0.607570	31.8786
Australia	Dollar	0.617325	0.747272	39.2086
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.191841	2.653224	139.2120
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.220283	0.266652	13.9910
Brunei	Dollar	0.500397	0.605730	31.7820
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000086	0.000104	0.0055
Thailand	Baht	0.020516	0.024835	1.3031
UAE	Dirham	0.224925	0.272272	14.2858
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.210500	63.5137
Argentina	Peso	0.271299	0.328407	17.2312
Brazil	Real	0.362168	0.438404	23.0026
Denmark	Kroner	0.134079	0.162303	8.5159
India	Rupee	0.018523	0.022422	1.1765
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.219376	0.265555	13.9334
Mexico	New Peso	0.077733	0.094096	4.9371
New Zealand	Dollar	0.566213	0.685401	35.9623
Norway	Kroner	0.126233	0.152805	8.0175
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013826	0.016736	0.8781
South Africa	Rand	0.134477	0.162784	8.5411
Korea	Won	0.000831	0.001006	0.0528
Sweden	Kroner	0.107121	0.129670	6.8037
Syria	Pound	0.015914	0.019264	1.0108
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025848	0.031289	1.6417
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000385	0.000466	0.0245

RP gross int'l reserves swell to over $18.4B

THE PHILIPPINES ENDED 2005 WITH A gross international reserves level of $18.41 billion, 13.5 percent percent higher than the $16.23 billion posted a year ago, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported yesterday.

The end-2005 GIR level was also significantly higher than the reserve target of $17 billion. It also exceeded the end-November level of $18.06 billion, BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said.

The swell in the GIR level compared to a month ago was due to the national government's deposit of its loan proceeds, as well as the BSP's income from investments abroad and foreign exchange operations.

The inflows, however, were partly offset by payments of maturing foreign exchange obligations of the public sector.

"The current GIR level would adequately cover about 3.8 months of imports of goods and payments of services and income," Tetangco said.

The GIR—consisting of the BSP's gross foreign currency holdings, gold reserves, special drawing rights from multilateral institutions and foreign investments—is an indicator of a country's ability to service the foreign exchange requirements of its economy, like importation and debt servicing.

Net international reserves, inclusive of revaluation of reserve assets and reserve-related liabilities, rose to $17.57 billion, or 2 percent higher than the end-November level of $17.23 billion, and 20.7 percent over the end-2004 level of $14.56 billion.

Doris C. Dumlao

'05 hot money inflows surge to $2.1B

End-year figure is 4 times greater than the $486.8M posted in 2004

By Doris C. Dumlao

NET FOREIGN INVESTMENTS IN LOCAL stocks, debt papers and bank products surged to $2.1 billion in 2005, or over four times better than a year ago despite the political turbulence that had then spooked Malacañang.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. yesterday reported that the portfolio inflows from abroad last year dwarfed the $486.8 million registered in 2004.

"The marked improvement in fiscal performance, sustained implementation of sound monetary policy, strong corporate profits results, and the appreciation of the peso on the back of a surge in OFW (overseas Filipino workers) remittances also contributed to positive investor sentiment during the year," Tetangco said.

The BSP earlier expected the 2005 foreign portfolio investments—also known as "hot money" due to their volatile nature—to reach $2.6 billion.

On a gross basis, foreign portfolio investments registered by the BSP during the past year reached $5.5 billion as against the $2.2 billion posted in 2004. Outflows or capital repatriations also doubled to $3.4 billion from the $1.7 billion of last year.

The bulk of the hot money lured into the country last year went to shares of stocks listed on the Philippine Stock Exchange. The hot money that went to the shares accounted for 69.3 percent of total inflows.

About 30 percent was invested in peso-denominated government securities primarily fixed rate treasury notes or FXTNs.

Peso time deposits in banks and money market instruments issued by the local private sector accounted for the remaining portion of foreign inflows.

"These investments were funded with new inward remittances of foreign exchange converted into pesos through banks operating in the Philippines," Tetangco said.

For the month of December alone, there was a net outflow of $4.9 million—the only month in 2004 when no net inflow was recorded. In the same month a year ago, there was a net inflow of $61.3 million.

"It was partly because some investors decided to cash in on profits in the last two weeks following the increase in prices of a number of major stocks and the appreciation of the peso," Tetangco said.

The biggest monthly hot money inflows were recorded in the first four months of 2005. The country raked in $543.5 million in net portfolio inflows in January, $333.9 million in February, $562.1 million in March and $279.8 million in April.

From then on, the inflows dwindled following the political turmoil brought on by accusations that President Macapagal-Arroyo had rigged the 2004 presidential elections.

Permanent tax relief for wage earners sought

By Michelle V. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE wants to make permanent the tax relief temporarily granted to minimum wage earners this year, and has urged Congress to pass a bill exempting the workers from income tax.

The DOF said the exemption would benefit 365,660 private sector employees and 51,872 government workers.

The finance agency earlier approved the tax relief measure, which temporarily stopped employers from withholding every month the income tax liabilities of their minimum wage employees.

The measure, which takes effect this month, allows minimum wage earners to enjoy in full their monthly income.

But since the measure is only administrative in nature, minimum wage earners will still have to pay their income tax liabilities on or before the end of fiscal year 2006, or April 15, 2007.

"We have a window of opportunity to make this permanent," Finance Secretary Margarito Teves told reporters. "Congress can enact a bill ... in time for the deadline of the filing of income tax returns in April 2007."

The tax relief and the proposed permanent income tax exemption are meant to ease the burden of wage earners brought on by the implementation of the VAT Reform Law last November.

The law expanded the coverage of the value-added tax to include oil and electricity, among others. The law also called for an increase in VAT rate from 10 to 12 starting Feb. 1.

Minimum wage earners are those whose monthly income is P5,000 or below, or whose annual income does not exceed P60,000. Minimum wage earners also include those whose daily pay is P325 or below.

In government service, minimum-wage earners are those who belong under the salary grades "1" to "3."

With the move to exempt minimum wage earners from withholding tax, the government stands to lose some P500 million in potential revenue. The DOF said the revenue loss would be something the government could afford.

A finance official said President Macapagal-Arroyo had already directed the DOF to study the possibility of also granting middle-income earners some form of tax relief.

Government believes that middle-income workers, rather than low-income earners, will bear the brunt of the VAT law.

The government estimated that the new VAT law could potentially raise at P81.4 billion in additional revenues a year.

Businessmen ...

From page B1

continued to be optimistic on the following sectors as drivers of growth: information technology-based services, mining, logistics, transportation and infrastructure; exports of electronics, food and coconut-based products; remittances from overseas Filipinos, and tourism-related industries.

"It is important that the government should continue to show consistency in its economic reform policies and in the promotion and development of small- and medium-scale enterprises that contribute immensely to rural income and job creation," Varela said.

"The private sector would also be looking closely on the public's acceptance of the proposed changes in the economic provisions of the Constitution," he added.

Stocks down ...

From page B1

The benchmark 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index fell 17.14 points, or 0.8 percent, to 2,133.79, after rising 2.8 percent in the past three days, including the 0.6 percent advance Thursday to a 10-month closing high.

"There was profit-taking after three sessions of gains. But the momentum is still positive," said Citiseconline.com investment analyst Mark Alan Canizares.

Canizares said the improving fiscal position, rising remittances from overseas Filipino workers and low interest rates were still expected to boost the economy and corporate earnings.

PLDT fell 1.4 percent to P1,820, while Bank of the Philippine Islands was off 3.5 percent at P55, possibly on concern it is about to lose its position as the country's second-largest commercial bank in assets after Banco de Oro announced during trading yesterday that it has made an offer to merge with Equitable PCI.

All sectoral indicators retreated except the property subindicator, which advanced. Decliners led gainers 46 to 31, while 50 stocks were unchanged.

AP

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Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

PROPERTY

Big plans for Romblon property

AGLICAY'S white sand beach amid tranquil surroundings is an alternative to other highly commercialized tourist destinations.

By Charles E. Buban

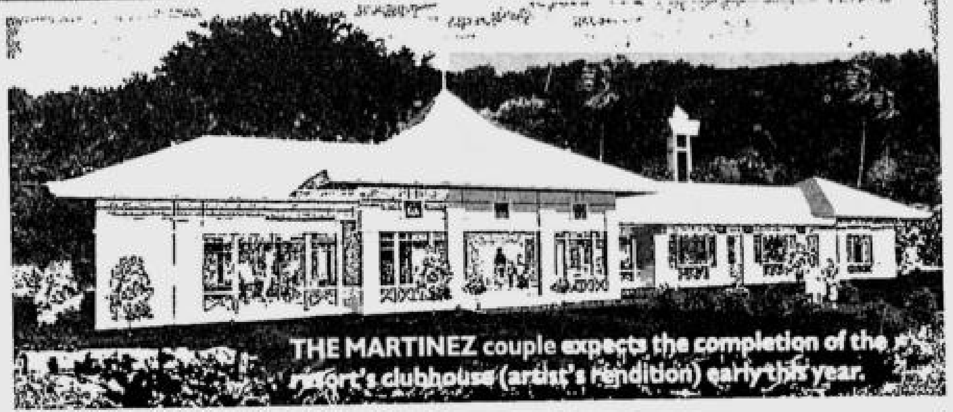
BALIKBAYAN COUPLE DR. GUILlermo and Glenda Martinez have dreamt of having their perfect secluded paradise in their home province of Romblon.

So it's no wonder that when the two retired after working—and being based for decades in the United States—they went straight to their hometown in Tablas island (the largest of the three islands of Romblon province) and invested their life's savings developing a 33-hectare peninsula located on the southeastern end of the island.

"We've been regularly visiting this peninsula even before there were structures here. The place is tranquil and naturally beautiful, so we thought, why not develop the place. That's how Aglicay Beach Resort came to be in 2000," recalled Guillermo, a retired surgeon.

The resort, located in Barangay Comod-om in Alcantara, Romblon, is approximately 20 minutes away from Tablas Airport, 60 minutes from Odiongan seaport.

"Its main attraction is its 700-meter-long white sand beach, which is quite unique in the province known more for its waterfalls, Spanish forts and lighthouses and treacherous mountain, Mt. Guiting-Guiting.



THE MARTINEZ couple expects the completion of the resort's clubhouse (artist's rendition) early this year.

Optimizing potential

Guillermo said their goal is to create a master plan that optimizes the potential of the peninsula's spectacular site and complements the surrounding assets.

"We want to position the peninsula as an alternative destination to Boracay, which is just two hours away from the place. In fact, we always receive guests who went to Boracay first but stayed afterward in Aglicay because they enjoyed more the place's closer-to-nature and less-commercialized ambiance," said Glenda, a retired chemist.

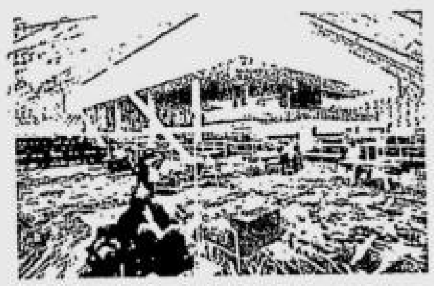
At present, the couple has already invested in several rows of bungalows, kiosks, a clubhouse and several sports facilities.

Said Guillermo: "We have also made trails for for campers who want to explore the hilly part of the peninsula as well as the caves located at the southeastern tip. We are also in the process of surveying a number of dive sites located around the peninsula."

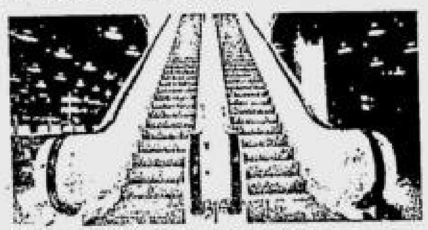
Glenda added the peninsula's varied topography and still undeveloped area offers a lot of possibilities for future development.

"The local government is fully supporting us in our endeavor since Aglicay is also helping other industries (land, sea, and air transport) as well as boosting the province's image one of the fast-developing tourist destination in the region," said Glenda.

Seattle Public Library



OPEN spaces are provided on each platform for library goers to read, surf the Net or meet.



CREATIVELY directing library-goers from one level to another

AMAZING STRUCTURES

EVERY LIBRARY-RAT'S PARADISE IS probably the best description for the Seattle Public Library, which was recognized the previous year in the American Institute of Architects' Honor Awards for Architecture.

The 11-floor dramatic glass and steel building was opened in May 2004 after Seattle voters approved a $196.4 million bond to improve Seattle's neighborhood libraries and build a new Central Library. Award-winning Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas and Joshua Ramus were the principal designers of the building which was made to be open and translucent so that people outside can see what transpires on every floor of the colossal library.

The library allows direct public access to much of its collection with its innovative "Books Spiral," a five-platform crystalline steel-and-glass structure connected by gradually sloping ramps. Each platform of the "Books Spiral" is assigned a specific subject area which makes it really easy for patrons to do research. Open spaces are also provided on each platform for library goers to read, surf the Net or meet.

User-friendly building

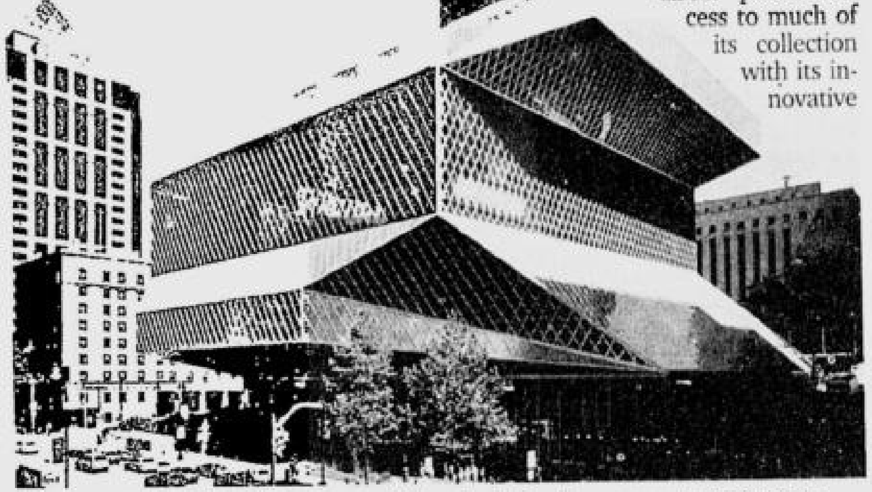
Serving as a civic icon and as a functional, user-friendly building with a mix of formal and informal spaces, the Seattle Public Library also has centers for children, teens and adult readers.

The children's area on the first level has a highly durable natural bamboo floor and is divided into two areas—one with bright yellow rubberized flooring and the other with bright pink. The Starbucks Teen Center on the third level, on the other hand, has orange polyurethane flooring, a warm color that complements the space and at the same time exclaims "pop culture!," also matching the age of the room's intended patrons.

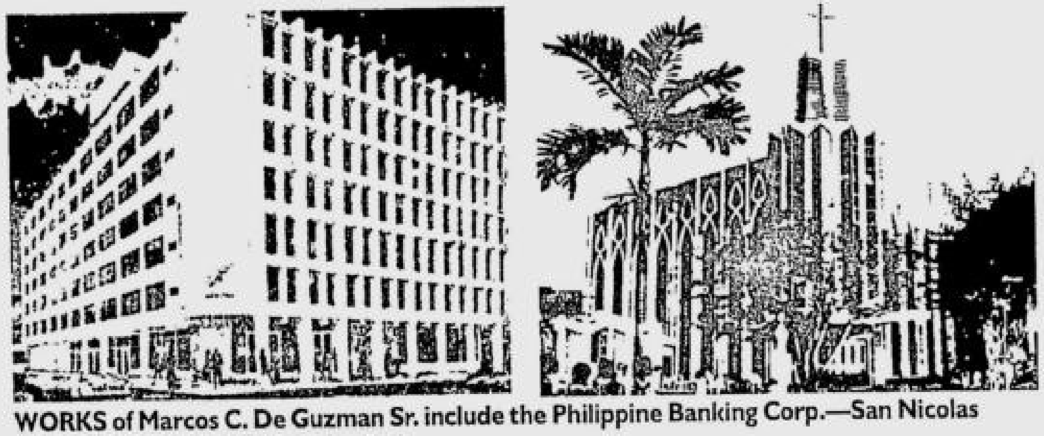
Even the escalators and elevators were given a bright, fluorescent yellow color to make it easier for patrons to find their way around and go from one level to another. Whoever said libraries have to be boring, ho-hum places?

The library currently has one million items in its collection and still has capacity for more. Exactly 9,906 shelves housing books and materials in the building can stretch 30 miles.

Dianne M. Villafuerte



THE SEATTLE Public Library: a striking deviation from your typical urban high-rise



WORKS of Marcos C. De Guzman Sr. include the Philippine Banking Corp.—San Nicolas branch (left) and the Jolo Cathedral.

Passage from then to now

LIVING ARCHITECTURE

Marcos de Guzman Jr.

TO BE ABLE TO MAKE A HEAD-ON START this year, it is worthwhile to make a meaningful pause and take a personal and collective evaluation of the year that had just passed. The aim is to be able to determine what had mattered most to us then and if the same weight should be given to these priorities. This holds true for any individual and company that are envisioning to render a better performance this year.

The architect is "engaged in a profession which carries with it grave responsibilities to the public." Moreover, "the profession of Architecture calls for men of the highest integrity, judgment, business capacity and artistic and technical ability." Any architect finds wisdom in these phrases from the Architects' Code of Ethical Conduct not only because he is under oath to perform them, but because it elevates the profession to its noble purpose.

Architectural contributions

Guided by these, my recollection dates back from the time when my father Marcos C. De Guzman Sr. founded our architectural firm. He was just a fresh graduate then from the University of Santo Tomas. From then on, he has greatly contributed to defining the skyline of Manila. His name is frequently mentioned when discussing the history of architecture in the Philippines. Most of his works were made during the '50s to the '80s which include churches, schools, movie theaters, residences and hotels.

FATHER and son receive a plaque on the firm's 55th year of service.

He is a self-made man and a man for others with his achievements going far beyond his architectural practice. He is a good husband, a good father and an exemplary practitioner which explains why three of his six children became architects. But most of all, he has been an excellent example to the community with the help he had rendered to numerous religious organizations. This had merited him a Papal Recognition as a knight of St. Silvester.

Tangible legacy

Now, our office has already celebrated its 55th year in the practice. So many years has passed, so many people had already come our way and taking this pause was indeed meaningful. It brings to mind not only the tangible legacy of the structures we had built, but more so the intangible memories of the people who had shared their dreams with us and we in turn turning these dreams into realities. As our office byline aptly puts it "Your dreams, our skills."

Along this trust, I had realized that the important question to ask ourselves is not: what matters most? But rather it is: who matters most? There is a great difference between the two: the former speaks of material things with finances at its greater weight, while it also speaks of prestige and accomplishments.

Though these are important elements in themselves, their true value lies in the persons who contributed and benefited from the financial gain, prestige and accomplishments of the office. These people are the ones who had pioneered the office, the ones who rendered their loyal service and the clients who keep their confidence in us.

And true enough, this year will take a better hue with our actions and decisions directed to supplying our personal response to the question: who matters to us most?

Murasaki opens at The Wharf

THE WHARF, A CENTERPIECE OF urban entertainment and convenience at the heart of Brittany Bay, recently introduced Murasaki, the newest addition to its array of restaurants. "A cozy Japanese restaurant just around the corner" is how Tito P. Delos Angeles describes Murasaki. Tito conceptualized this project over a year ago, actually from ground zero.

This little Japanese restaurant was not freed of its birth pains, and when it finally came to be, there had to be a soft opening in order to polish operations up, considering Tito and his partners, Malouchi A. Gahol, Jun Gaffud, Mark Madrid and Levi Baligod had no experience whatsoever in the restaurant business, except that they all love good food.

When Murasaki's menu was being prepared, each item, before it can be offered to the public, had to pass many criticisms and tests, including nonusage of MSG.

Resto with a heart

Tito and Jun both agree that quality should never be sacrificed when it comes to good food, that is why Murasaki buys only the best and the fresh. But Murasaki is not only about good food, it is also about a restaurant with a heart. The owners want its clientele to enjoy quality Japanese cuisine at a price affordable to all.

Murasaki also wants their guests to take the time to enjoy good food since time is also given in the preparation of each dish that leaves the kitchen.

In today's hustle and bustle, Murasaki understands that guests want their orders out fast, but this little nook prides itself that each dish is cooked only when ordered and for this reason, a minimum of 20 to 25 minutes is what it takes for the finished product to reach the tables.

Schedule

Murasaki is open Sunday to Thursday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 11 p.m., and Fridays and Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 12 midnight.

Mondays are for the staff to rest, to relax and to enjoy after six days of good work—why? Because Murasaki is all heart.

The Wharf at Brittany Bay is the newest happening place south of Manila. Brittany Bay is a unique community inspired by the lifestyle and architecture of San Francisco and is a brainchild of the maverick real estate planner of the finest themed communities, Brittany Corp. For more inquiries on The Wharf or Brittany Bay, call 850-2868 or 850-3084, or visit www.brittany.com.ph.

Finding home at last in Bonifacio Ridge

THE WENGERS enjoy quality time at home in Bonifacio Ridge.

FOR INTERIOR DESIGNER RACHELLE Wenger and her family, the best part of moving back in the country is finally settling for good in Bonifacio Ridge.

Says Wenger: "We love it here! It offers all the conveniences for a modern home. It's accessible and, more important, secure."

Security seemed a foremost concern in their choice for a home. "It was difficult living in a place where we felt unsafe. Since moving here, we never had to worry about it anymore," relates Wenger.

Fine showcases

Having lived in high-rise residences in both Thailand and Hong Kong, the self-confessed condo dweller was only more than happy to settle in a place like Bonifacio Ridge. She even made sure that it had all the mementos of their previous homes etched in every corner.

Home accents from Spain, quaint finds from thrift shops during travels, and even heirloom antiques were among the many fine showcases at the Wengers' living space. It consequently exudes a real homey atmosphere atypical of most condominium units.

Wenger welcomes the opportunity to do more than just tending to her family. "I am actually looking into opening a shop here. It's good because I can work and at the same time, spend quality time with my children."

More endearing

What was once considered a mere investment and an occasional vacation home turned into something a little more endearing—a place to call their own. "It's fantastic to live here, really. Lots of greenery, great views, amenities, lots of space for children to play freely and it's very well secured. Makes you feel good to be home."

Bonifacio Ridge is a beautifully crafted two-tower residential condominium where moving in is happening every day, and with units ready for occupancy. Strategically located within Bonifacio Global City and managed and marketed by Ayala Land Premier, Bonifacio Ridge offers complete, first-rate amenities to meet the varying lifestyles of its residents. Model units are available for viewing onsite.

E-mail: pr_science_health@inquirer.com.ph

SCIENCE/HEALTH

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Green allies in health, healing stage comeback

By Charles E. Buban

SINCE THE START of recorded history, plants have been used to cure diseases, ease pain and heal bodily discomforts and ills.

Plants were the first medicines, and even as man developed sophisticated and powerful pharmaceutical drugs, medicinal plants remained an important tool for treating illnesses in most cultures.

In fact, the World Health Organization estimates that 80 percent of the world's population still depends on traditional medicine for their health needs.

"While modern or western medicine remains the mainstream of health care, traditional medicinal treatments continue to enjoy considerable popularity," said Lito Abelarde, president of the Chamber of Herbal Industries of the Philippines Inc., an association of local manufacturers of herbal products that include medicines, food and cosmetics.

'Ampalaya'

Abelarde cited the *ampalaya*, which his company helped popularize in the the country through various food supplement products (under brand name Charantia).

"The *ampalaya* has long been used as a traditional home remedy for diabetes in many parts of the world. In addition, numerous published scientific studies on the various parts of the *ampalaya* plant confirm that this crawling vine, especially its fruit and seeds, contains natural chemicals that bring about hypoglycemic (lowering of glucose level in the blood) and antihyperglycemic (preventing the elevation of glucose level in the blood) actions that are useful in controlling blood sugar in diabetic persons," he explained.

Still, a lot of doctors are skeptical about evidences that support the use of herbal medicines and other plant-based dietary supplements.

"Generations of medical students have been taught 'evidence-based' medicine and have come to expect drugs whose safety is assured by food and drug bodies and whose efficacy has been shown in controlled, double-blind clinical trials," said Daniel Stepp, global sales director of Xanthone Corp., a Cebu-based company that markets mangosteen juice worldwide.

Raising quality

Stepp said companies must continue refining their manufacturing process not only to raise the quality of their products but also to earn the respect of the scientific community.

"Only through good manufacturing practice can we ensure the safety and quality of the product. There are many ways to do this, in our case, we set up our plant in Wyoming under strict guidance of the US Food and Drug Administration. We also used cold process in extracting the [mangosteen] juice to retain most of its nutrients especially the xanthones, which have become our product's main selling point," said Stepp.

Xanthones are a class of antioxidants found in the mangosteen fruit and are believed to have beneficial effects on some cardiovascular diseases and cancer.

The rising popularity of herbal and other plant-based natural products can be ascribed to the search for a more "natural" health system and dissatisfaction with current health care and its costs. But Abelarde said this should not mean that a patient should abandon his doctor-prescribed medicines.

"We always remind [our clients] that herbal and plant-based dietary supplements are still considered food supplements, meaning they are intended only to reinforce one's diet. At the moment, it would not be advisable for someone who is under medication to reduce or stop taking his doctor-prescribed medication just because our products are proving effective," Abelarde said.

Local research

Stepp called for further scientific research, saying educating the public was crucial.

In the country, the principal responsibility for studying herbal medicines lies with the Philippine Institute of Traditional and Alternative Health Care (Pitahc), a government-owned and -controlled corporation attached to the Department of Health. Pitahc provides traditional and alternative health care products, services and technologies that have been proven safe, effective and affordable.

4 processing plants

Pitahc owns and operates four herbal pharmaceutical and processing plants, which have been in existence for almost 18 years. These plants, located in the cities of Tuguegarao, Tacloban, Davao and Cotabato, manufacture three herbal medicines: *lagundi* (anti-cough and anti-asthma), *sambong* (for kidney stones and hypertension), and *tsaang-gubat* (for symptomatic relief of abdominal colic).

These products are available in the market and have been approved by the country's Bureau of Food and Drugs and are routinely prescribed by doctors.

"Indeed, herbal and other plant-based dietary supplements are enjoying a modern-day renaissance and it is heartening to see people turning once again to this most ancient tradition of healing," said Abelarde.

From and to readers

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

HAPPY NEW YEAR, EVERYONE!

Reader CHIAJ@wpro.who.int asks: **My son is in third year high school. I would like him to prepare for his college entrance exams. Could you recommend a good review school? I see review schools offering sessions in preparation for the UPCAT exams, but I am not sure of the quality of their lessons/courses. I hope you can help.**

I do not believe in review schools or tutorial centers in general, but I am happy that your son is taking college entrance tests seriously even if he is still in third year high school. This means he has enough time to prepare for the exam. The ideal way to do this is to make sure that he understands every lesson he has learned so far in school.

Most schools meet at least minimum standards for English and Math (the two integral subjects needed to do well in exams), and Filipino and Science, which also come out in, say, the UPCAT.

Students who have been doing well in high school do not have to cram for a college entrance test, since they already have stock knowledge. Besides, cramming leads to panic, test anxiety, and possibly, mental block. But for students who do not have a good grasp of high school math and English, then reviews are needed.

I cannot recommend any review center, but you can always ask around. I am sure you know of students from your son's school who have gone to review centers. Ask them for feedback. Did the reviews help in the actual exam? If so, it will not hurt to try them out.

There are a lot of review books in the market, with varying quality, of course. Your son can look through them and start reviewing on his own (or with your help). Good luck.

High school math

Sharina Padua [sharina311@yahoo.com], Cynthia de Leon, Nhida de Vera, Grace Lucero and Veronica Parica write: **We heard that you are an expert in math. We are students of Meycauayan College in Bulacan and we need information about the different approaches in teaching mathematics in high school. Can you give us information about this?**

I admire your resourcefulness in writing to me, but this column is not a venue to do students' work for them. I advise you to ask your professor for help in your project.

What I will do here is to give you tips. First, get my past columns and books (especially "Eureka!"). I have written extensively about math teaching and learning in high school.

Second, since you e-mailed me, I assume that you are familiar with the World Wide Web and how to get information from it.

This requires patience and discernment, qualities which you should develop during your stay in school. Use the search engines to help you with your homework (there are thousands of sites available; see which ones are useful for you). Good luck.

Math problem

Reader Lester Yee [scitechles13@yahoo.com] has this interesting query: **A cousin from Australia State High School gave me these problems. How do you factor the following:**

i.) $(x^3+ y^3)^2 + (x^5)(y) - 3(x^3)(y^3) + (x)(y^5)$

ii) $(a^3) + 3(a^2)(b) + 3(a)(b^2) + 2(b^3) - 6(b^2)(c) + 12(b)(c^2) - 8(c^3)$

Thank you for these problems; I gave them myself to some of my students, who eventually succeeded in solving them.

I don't want to spoil the fun of readers by giving the complete solution, so let me just give some tips.

First, straightforward factoring won't work; there are too many terms.

Second, you need to think of grouping them properly and if needed, breaking them down into even smaller units.

Third, sum and differences of cubes are important, and perhaps, the binomial theorem.

Let me challenge readers here. Can anyone e-mail the complete factoring of the two problems above? The first one to do so will receive a copy of my latest book "Arithmetricks." *E-mail your answers to blessbook@yahoo.com.*

Science journalism

By Rafael R. Castillo, MD

MEDICAL FILES

IT'S HEARTENING TO NOTE THAT OUR science journalists are becoming more active. The Philippine Science Journalists Association (PSciJourn) recently inducted its officers who pledged to further strengthen the role of science journalists, not only as writers, editors or broadcasters, but as key players in civil society and nation building.

The PSciJourn is composed of science and technology communicators (journalists, writers, editors, broadcasters, film and video producers, academic and research press officers), including those devoted to specific scientific disciplines or branches of science writing (e.g., medicine, physics, environment).

Excellent job

Angelo Palmones of dzMM and the other officers have done an excellent job in leading the PSciJourn since it was founded five years ago. It is now an active member of the World Federation of Science Journalists.

The officers promised to remain steadfast to the organization's mission to promote professional excellence in science journalism by providing educational resources and opportunities for professional networking and collaborative undertakings among its members.

Bridge

If harnessed well, the PSciJourn can be a potent force that can help advance the reach of science journalism in the Philippines so it could serve as a bridge between our scientists and the public.

Science journalists can no longer be mere reporters of science or spokespersons of scientists. They should also serve as thoughtful critics and commentators.

They should be able to translate in layman's terms the relevance of science and technology to the daily life of ordinary persons, and explain how the processes of research, discovery and modern technology impact on society.

The public must be made aware of the social, economic and political context and implications of science and technology.

Annual meeting

A major regular activity of the PSciJourn is the convening of all members annually which serves as a venue for educational programs and professional networking, and a forum for disseminating information about advances, achievements, opportunities and trends in science journalism, as well as current issues, problems and threats to the field and its practitioners.

Last year, the PSciJourn launched the annual Science Journalism Awards aimed at promoting excellence in science writing and at recognizing meritorious original articles.

We hope the members of the PSciJourn can wield their collective power and influence to encourage publishers and broadcast producers to dedicate more space and time to science and technology coverage and to lend support to the professional training of science journalists, especially our young provincial colleagues.

Only well-informed and educated people can understand the consequences of scientific issues or the applications of research so they can ultimately make an intelligent decision either to support or reject them.

The other officers of PSciJourn are Lyn Resurreccion (Business Mirror), Susan Layos (freelance journalist), Melvin Calimag (Manila Bulletin), Rudy Fernandez (Philippine Star), Melly Tenorio (dzRB), Erwin Oliva (INQ7.net), and Vicky Bartilet (PSciJourn executive director).

Those interested to join the PSciJourn may call or send a text message to 0927-3928417, 0920-2673387 or 0917-8868409.

The secret of flight

DISCOVER

Massie Santos Ballon

"TOU D'ABORD POUSSÉ PAR CE QUI fait en aviation, j'ai appliqué aux insectes les lois de la résistance de l'air, et je suis arrivé avec M. Sainte-Lague a cette conclusion que leur vol est impossible."

Paraphrasing Google's text translator, the sentence reads: "Initially pushed by what causes flight in aviation, I applied to the insects the laws of air resistance, and, with M. Sainte-Lague, arrived at the conclusion that for them flight is impossible."

The sentence was written by French entomologist August Magnan and appears in his book "Le Vol Des Insects" (Flight of the Insects). It was 1934 and he and his associate André Sainte-Lague, an engineer by training, were studying how insects fly.

Over time, however, Magnan's words somehow became associated with the urban legend of the bumblebee. The story goes: At a dinner party in the 1930s, a biologist asked an aerodynamics engineer how a bumblebee could possibly fly given its big round body and tiny, delicate wings. The engineer quickly scribbled down some calculations and found that the math said bee flight wasn't possible. Yet, the biologist enthused, the bumblebee flies anyway. With that, he walked off triumphantly singing the praises of nature over engineering.

Inaccurate model

The story is an inspirational favorite, yet in the interest of fairness it should be pointed out that the mathematical model the engineer used wasn't exactly accurate. The engineer made certain assumptions about how the insect's wings moved, which have since been proven wrong. Still, it has taken several decades to correctly determine how a bumblebee flies.

In the Dec. 13 issue of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences journal, researchers from the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas explain, finally, the secret of bee flight.

The work was led by Michael Dickinson, a bioengineering professor at Caltech. Dickinson's research interests involve building a fully functional robotic fly that moves and behaves just like the real thing. His lab expects to apply the findings from this study to this quest and believes other scientists equally interested in developing other scale robotic insects will benefit from the work.

Most of the research for the paper was done by a postdoctoral student named Doug Altshuler in Dickinson's lab. Altshuler's research is on how the nervous system regulates movement.

To find out exactly how bumblebees fly, Dickinson et al. captured several honeybees from a hive at the University of Nevada and used high-speed photography and videotapes to capture their flight inside a specially constructed clear box.

The videos were viewed to examine the bee's wing and body movements, as well as to calculate the wingbeat patterns and wing angles. Researchers took the data and tried to duplicate their findings using a robotic bee wing mockup.

Laying story to rest

The findings? Contrary to popular notion, bumblebees don't flap their wings up and down. Instead, they flap their wings very, very quickly and rotate the wings. This helps a bee not just hover in mid-air, but also move from hive to flower and back and still be able to support itself and any nectar load it can harvest and bring back to the hive as food.

This research should finally lay the 70-year-old bee story to rest.

"We're no longer allowed to use this story about not understanding bee flight as an example of where science has failed, because it is just not true," Dickinson said in a Caltech press release.

Yet perhaps the story should continue to circulate, if only to remind people that not everything is what it appears to be and good things come to those who take the time to set up the calculations correctly.

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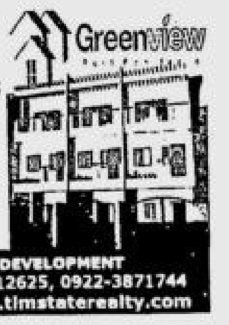

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January 6, 2006

TO ALL STOCKHOLDERS OF SALCON POWER CORPORATION:

Please be advised that KEPCO Philippines Corporation ("*Kephilco*"), KEPCO Philippines Holdings, Inc. ("*Kepco Holdings*"), Intrepid Holdings, Inc. ("*Intrepid*") and JAD Holdings, Inc. ("*Jad*") have filed a Tender Offer Report (SEC Form 19-1) with the Securities and Exchange Commission (The "*SEC*") and the Philippine Stock Exchange ("*PSE*") pursuant to Section 19 of the Securities Regulation Code in connection with the Buyers' intention to acquire common shares representing at least 43.81% but no more than 60% of the outstanding capital stock of Salcon Power Corporation (the "*Company*") (such intention to acquire the Shares, the "*Tender Offer*").

Kephilco, Kepco Holdings, Intrepid and Jad have obtained commitments from Salcon Holdings Philippines, Inc. ("*SHPI*") and ATC Engineering Sdn Bhd ("*ATC*") for the purchase by Kepco Holdings, Intrepid and Jad (collectively the "*Buyers*") of an aggregate of 654,995,108 common shares (approximately 73.02% of the Shares subject of the Tender Offer) from SHPI and ATC. The Buyers intend that the Intrepid and Jad (collectively, the "*IJ Group*") shall acquire any Shares that may be tendered by any stockholders other than SHPI and ATC in response to the Tender Offer.

The Tender Offer shall commence at 9:30 a.m. on January 6, 2006, and end at 3:00 p.m. on February 2, 2006 (the "*Tender Offer Period*"). The Shares to be tendered are intended to be crossed on the PSE on February 15, 2006 (the "*Cross Date*"). Should any of the business days during the period from January 6, 2006, the commencement of the Tender Offer Period, until February 15, 2006, the Cross Date, be declared a non-working holiday after the date hereof, the Tender Offer Period shall be extended and the Cross Date postponed, by such number of business days as is equivalent to the number of business days declared non-working holidays after the date hereof.

The purchase price for the acquisition of the Shares is P 1,614,596,656.00, or P1.80 per share, and will be payable in Philippine Pesos. Subject to the Terms of the Tender Offer attached as **Annex A** to the letter dated January 6, 2006 (the "*Offer Letter*") sent by the Buyers and Kephilco to the Company's stockholders of record as of December 23, 2005 (the date of the most recent list of stockholders available from the Stock Transfer Agent), all stockholders of the Company may tender all or a portion of their shares for acceptance and purchase by the Buyers within the Tender Offer Period.

The Buyers intend to pay for the tendered and accepted Shares on the Cross Date. Payments for the tendered and accepted Shares shall be made available by ATR-Kim Eng Securities, Inc. (the "*Paying Agent*") in the form of checks made payable to the tendering Stockholder for pick-up by the tendering Stockholders after 3:00 p.m. on the date falling three (3) business days after the Cross Date at the following address: 17th Floor, Tower One & Exchange Plaza, Ayala Triangle, Ayala Avenue, Makati City. Any payment not collected from the Paying Agent within thirty (30) calendar days from the payment date referred to above shall be dispatched, via registered mail, to the last recorded address of the tendering Stockholder at that Stockholder's risk.

Tendering Stockholders who hold stock certificates ("*Scrip Stockholders*") should submit, within the Tender Offer Period, their duly endorsed stock certificates and the duly accomplished Application to Tender Shares (the "*Application*") in the form attached as **Annex B** to the Offer Letter to ATR-Kim Eng Securities, Inc. (the "*Depository*") at 17th Floor, Tower One & Exchange Plaza, Ayala Triangle, Ayala Avenue, Makati City, together with the other documentary requirements specified in the Offer Letter.

For the convenience of Scrip Stockholders who are based in Cebu and Davao or elsewhere outside Luzon, shares of common stock in the Company may be tendered by submitting the requirements specified in the Offer Letter to the Cebu and Davao branches of the Depository no later than 3:00 p.m. on January 30, 2006:

Cebu Office:
ATR-Kim Eng Securities, Inc.
Room 206
Cebu Holdings Center, Cebu Business Park
Cebu City
Telephone No.: (032) 231 1324
Attention: Ms. Cheryl L. Go

Davao Office:
ATR-Kim Eng Securities, Inc.
No. 7 MT Aquino Building
J.P. Cabaguio Avenue
Davao City
Telephone No. (082) 224 2860
Attention: Mr. Miguel Luis R. Aquino

After 3:00 p.m. on January 30, 2006, Scrip Stockholders who are based outside Luzon may tender their shares of common stock in the Company only by submiting the foregoing requirements to the Depository's offices in Makati City.

The Depository reserves the right to require tendering Stockholders to present additional documents for purposes of determining the validity, eligibility and acceptability of the shares of common stock being tendered by those Stockholders.

The Depository will submit the share certificates for validation to Metrobank Trust Banking, the Company's stock transfer agent (the "*Stock Transfer Agent*") at 17th Flr., GT Tower International 6813 Ayala Ave., corner H.V. dela Costa St., Makati City. Defective Applications (*e.g.*, any Application with a discrepancy between the specimen signatures on file and the endorsement on the stock certificates) must be corrected within the Tender Offer Period to avoid being rejected by the Buyers. Consequently, Stockholders are strongly urged against tendering their shares at the last minute to allow all parties sufficient time within which to correct any deficiencies in the Application.

Stockholders are also urged to indicate their telephone numbers in their respective Applications to allow the Depository to inform them immediately of any deficiencies in their Applications.

Tendering Stockholders whose shares are lodged with the Philippine Central Depository Nominee Corporation (such Stockholders, "*Scripless Stockholders*") should instruct their brokers to electronically transfer their shares of common stock in the Company to ATR-Kim Eng Securities, Inc. (the "*Broker*") in accordance with the guidelines attached as Annex F to the Offer Letter for receipt by the Broker prior to 3:00 p.m. of February 2, 2006. The Broker shall thereafter act as custodian of the Shares until such time that sale and transfer of the Shares to the Buyers is completed or the tendered Shares are withdrawn in accordance with the Terms of the Tender Offer attached as Annex A to the Offer Letter

Tendering Stockholders may withdraw any Shares tendered any time before the end of the Tender Offer Period. For a withdrawal to be effective, written notice of withdrawal must be received by the Depository (for Scrip Stockholders) or by the Broker (for Scripless Stockholders) no later than 3:00 p.m. of February 2, 2006. Withdrawn Shares shall be returned in the same form they were received to the withdrawing Stockholder's broker (for scripless Shares) or to the withdrawing Stockholder (for certificated Shares) within three (3) trading days from the end of the Tender Offer Period. Any and all costs and expenses incurred in connection with the return of the withdrawn Shares shall be borne by the Stockholder making the withdrawal.

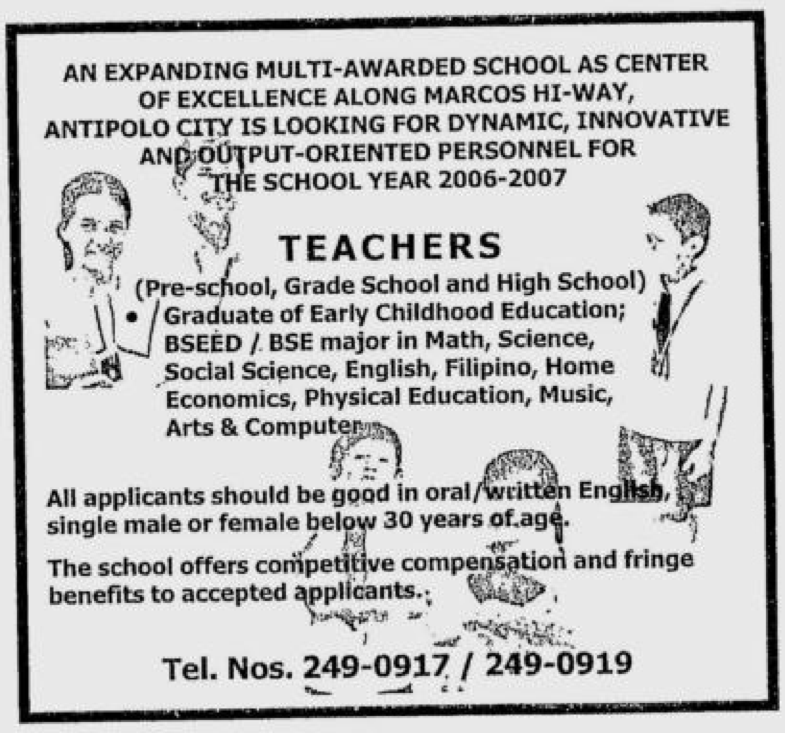
Copies of the SEC Form 19-1 filed with the SEC and the tender offer application kit may be obtained by Stockholders from the Company and the Broker at their addresses indicated above, and from the Public Information and Assistance Center of the Philippine Stock Exchange at G/F, PSE Center, Exchange Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Copies of this letter, along with the Application and the attachments will be sent to the Company's stockholders of record as of December 23, 2005 (the date of the most recent available list from the Stock Transfer Agent) by registered mail.

Thank you and best regards.

KEPCO Philippines Corporation
KEPCO Philippines Holdings, Inc.
By:
Name: Lee, Gil-Gu

Intrepid Holdings, Inc.
JAD Holdings, Inc.
By:
Name: Dennis T. Villareal

(PDI--Jan. 6, 7 & 8, 2006)



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OBITUARIES

RATE
P245 per column centimeter
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DEADLINE
for reservations / cancellations / corrections
Monday to Sunday.
12:00 noon
Day before publication

"For God so loved the World, that He gave us His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have Everlasting life."
—John 3:16

On the 5th of January 2006,
our beloved

Felicitas Sus Em

Loving wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother

went home to be in God's eternal kingdom
there to live in peace and perfection
Her loving family mourns her passing and wish her eternal rest.

"I'd like the memory of me to be a happy one.
I'd like to leave an afterglow of smiles when life is done.
I'd like to leave an echo whispering softly down the ways.
Of happy times and laughing times and bright and sunny days.
I'd like the tears of those who grieve to dry before the sun
Of happy memories that I leave when life is done."

Her body lies in state at Chapel 6 of the Mortuary and Crematory
at The Heritage Park, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.
On-going wake until January 9, 2006.

Cremation will be on January 10, 2006, Tuesday
at the Mortuary and Crematory of The Heritage Park
after the 9:00 am Christian Mass.

Mortuary and Crematory at HERITAGE PARK

MA. VICTORIA CABRERA PEREZ

Founder

DMP INTL. SERVICES, INC.

Peacefully joined our Creator
on January 4, 2006 at the age of 61.

Loving husband: **Benjamin**;
children: **Mardict**, **Midette** and **Benson**;
daughter-in-law: **Bambi**; son-in-law: **Danny**;
grandchildren: **Bianca**, **Bea**, **Mark**, **Nadine**
and **Maica**; brothers/sisters: **Gloria**,
Angel (†), **Gay**, **Marvy**, **Malou** & **Chito**;
relatives and friends request the pious readers
to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state
at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels
in Sucat Road, Parañaque City.

Interment will be on January 8, 2006,
3:00 p.m. at Loyola Memorial Park,
Parañaque City.

Renato Hontiveros Solidum, 78

RENATO HONTIVEROS SOLIDUM OF IBAJAY AKLAN, DIED IN THE GRACE of our Lord on January 3, 2006 at the age of 78. His bereaved wife Consuelo Puyal Averia (†); children Ma. Theresa, Marilou and Robert; son-in-law Nabel and daughter-in-law Estee; sisters Consoladora S. Bofi (†), Araceli S. Legaspi (†), Teresita S. Bisnar (†), brothers Expedito (†), and Ramie (†), grandchildren Karim, Thamer, Bijan and Rafael Hanz; sisters and brothers-in-law, nephews, nieces, relatives and friends request the pious readers to offer a special prayer for the repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at The San Roque Parish Church, San Roque St., Boni Mandaluyong City. Interment will take place today, Saturday at Himlayang Pilipino, Tandang Sora, Quezon City after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at San Roque Parish Church.

NOEL S. ABESAMIS

(December 25, 1945 – January 3, 2006)

Has peacefully joined his Creator.

His remains lie in state at the Holy Trinity Chapel (Sucat, Parañaque). There will be a memorial service on Sunday, January 8, at 10:30 a.m. Mass will be at 12:30 p.m., followed by cremation at the Holy Trinity Crematorium.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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INQUIRER OBITUARIES

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FR. FELIXBERTO S. TRINIDAD, S.J.

was called home to the Lord on Friday,
6 January 2006.

Wake : Oratory of St. Ignatius at Loyola House of Studies
Ateneo de Manila University Campus, Loyola Heights, Q.C.
Mass will be celebrated every evening at 8:00 P.M.
Funeral Mass : at 8:00 A.M. on Monday, 9 January
in the Oratory of St. Ignatius, Loyola House of Studies.
Interment : Sacred Heart Novitiate Cemetery, Novaliches, Q.C.
immediately after the Funeral Mass.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE REPOSE OF HIS SOUL.

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NATIONAL SALES RALLY
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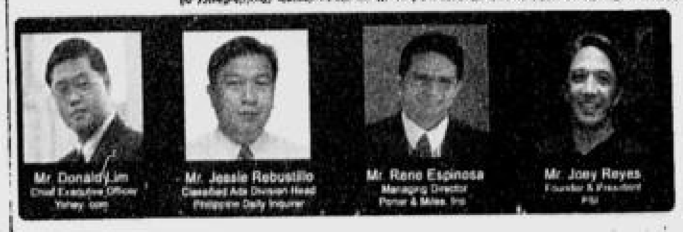
January 27 2006 8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. / Holiday Inn Galleria



"It is a wretched taste to be gratified with mediocrity when the excellent lies before us"
- Isaac Disraeli

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- Reading Body Language: 10 Breakthrough Ideas
- 5 Common Blunders in Sales Negotiation
- 6 Power Sources in Sales Negotiation
- 7 Sales Negotiation Techniques
- 7 Killer Tactics in Handling Price Objections
- 8 Proven-Effective Ways of Closing More Sales
- How to create a sense of urgency : 3 Essential Methods
- BONUS TOPICS:
  > Latest Trends in Marketing / Marketing Convergence
  > Neuro-Linguistics Programming and Selling: 3 Mental Maps
  > Review of the Basic Presentation Techniques

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Global economy's preference for OFWs surges in 2005

THE DEPARTMENT of Labor and Employment (DOLE) said the demand for skilled overseas Filipino workers (O FWs) in the global economy surged in 2005, notwithstanding the effects of the new Japanese visa regulations on overseas Filipino entertainers.

Labor and Employment Secretary Patricia A. Sto. Tomas said that globally, the total number of overseas employment contracts processed for the OFWs reached 981,337 from January 1 to December 31, 2005, or 39,615 higher than the 941,722 contracts processed in the same period in 2004.

She said that the solid gains in the global scene had been achieved amidst the government's relentless efforts against illegal recruitment and human trafficking, as well as efficient, fruitful marketing efforts complemented by the push to improve the welfare and protection of OFWs worldwide.

"Our global welfare thrusts for the OFWs have been strengthened further with the reinvigoration of our more than 30 Philippine Overseas Labor Offices (POLO) in key cities overseas with significant OFW populations, including two new POLOs situated in Brussels, Belgium which is the seat of the European economy, and in Jordan complementing other POLOs in the Middle East," Sto. Tomas noted.

"Even as our figures are preliminary and do not yet include the records from the country's regional international exit points, we expect the total global deployment and number of overseas employment contracts for 2005 to increase further as the final data come in," she added.

Regional exit points outside of Metro Manila located in Davao, Clark and Laoag account for a portion of total deployment.

Sto. Tomas said the overseas labor market in 2005 was highlighted by the continuing preference for both land-based OFWs and the Filipino seafarers by foreign employers.

She said that for the land-based sector, the number of overseas employment contracts for OFWs reached 679,009 as of December 31, 2005, surpassing by 28,803 the 650,206 processed in the same period in 2004.

"Per our preliminary data, more overseas employment contracts were processed for new hire land-based workers, reaching a global total of 399,696 in 2005, or 8,933 higher the 390,763 processed in 2004," she said, adding that the contracts processed for rehired OFWs also grew to 279,313 in 2005, or 19,869 more than the 259,444 previously processed.

Meanwhile, on the maritime front, the total global employment contracts processed for Filipino seafarers surpassed the 300,000 mark for the first time in 2005, reaching 302,328, or 10,812 higher than the 291,516 contracts processed during the previous year.

"On the average, some 2,711 overseas employment contracts for both land- and sea-based OFWs have been processed on a daily basis in 2005, or almost five percent (5%) more than the average 2,594 contracts processed daily in 2004," Sto. Tomas further said.

CANON MARKETING (PHILIPPINES), INC.
2153 Don Chino Roces Avenue
Makati City

Notice of Missing Official Receipts

This is to inform the general public, particularly Canon customers, that the following official receipts of **CANON MARKETING (PHILIPPINES), INC.**, are missing and declared lost:

O.R. No.

From	To
565096	565100
637283	637300

Accordingly, **CANON MARKETING (PHILIPPINES), INC.**, will not honor transactions for which the above enumerated official receipts were issued.

(PDI–Jan. 7, 2006)

National Power Corporation

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Republic of the Philippines

NPC- MMSD 2006-001

Fuel Hauling Services – Luzon Area/ Various Spare Parts and Lube Oils for NPC-SPUG

1. The NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION (NPC), through its approved Corporate Budget of CY 2005 intends to apply the sum of **(Please see schedule under Item no. 9)** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract listed below. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. NPC now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for GOODS listed below. Delivery of the GOODS is required by the date indicated in the bid documents. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents. ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act", and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from NPC and inspect the Bidding Documents at the Address given below from 8:30 AM to 3:30 PM from Monday to Friday. Issuance of Bidding Documents shall start on January 6, 2006 from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Monday to Friday. No Bid Documents shall be issued on the date of bidding.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount listed below. The method of payment will be cash. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. NPC will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on dates listed below at the designated NPC function rooms.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address as listed in the Bid Documents on or before the dates stated below. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form as stated in the Bid Documents. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be on the dates specified hereunder at the designated NPC function rooms. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
9. ITEMS FOR BID.

Schedule	Date/Time & Place of Bidding	Item Description	PR No. / Inquiry No.	ABC (In Pesos)	Bid Docs Price
I	January 31, 2006 10:00 A.M. Moriones Room	Hauling Services: for SPUG-Luzon Operations – Tablas DPP / Romblon DPP / PB109 / PB114	PB060131-MMMT4131 HO-LOD-05-213	10,286,550.00	P 3,300.00
II		Hauling Services: Masbate Pier to Sibuyan, Concepcion, Banton, Corcuera, San Jose & Ticao DPP	PB060104-MMMT3994(PB2) HO-LOD-05-190	4,965,080.00	P 1,100.00
III		Hauling Services: Manila Pier to Lubang DPP	PB060104-MMMT3995(PB2) HO-LOD-05-191	2,813,500.00	P 1,100.00
IV	January 31, 2006 2:00 P.M. Moriones Room	Air Compressor for Power Barge 119	SB051103-MMJP3768(LSB 2/NP/PB) HO-B19-05-085	790,000.00	P 550.00
V		High Pressure Hose, Jack Cylinder Cap, etc. for Power Barge 108	PB051004-MMAM3515(PB2) HO-PB8-05-045	945,608.00	P 550.00
VI		Spare Parts of 6DK32 Daihatsu Engines of Power Barge 108	PB050906-MMAM3350(PB2) HO-PB8-05-025	2,780,000.00	P 1,100.00
VII	February 3, 2006 10:00 A.M. Kañao Room	Spare Parts of 5x260 Kw Perkins Nos. 1, 3, 4, 5 & 6) of Cuyo DPP	PB060203-MMVB4138 SL-CUY-05-014	3,261,700.00	P 1,100.00
VIII		Spare Parts of 1 x 448 Kw CKD for Cuyo Diesel Plant	PB060203-MMVB4139 SL-CUY-05-025	2,565,200.00	P 1,100.00
IX	February 3, 2006 2:00 P.M. Kañao Room	Spare Parts of Dale-Perkins Balabac Diesel Power Plant	PB060203-MMVB4140 SL-BCD-05-016	1,056,000.00	P 550.00
X		Spare Parts of 2 x 54.4 Kw Onis Visa Gensets of Linapacan DPP	PB060203-MMVB4141 SL-LIN-05-006	585,000.00	P 550.00
XI		Spare Parts of Unit No. 1 (54 Kw Onis Visa Genset) for Agutaya Diesel Plant	PB060203-MMVB4142 SL-ADP-05-011	475,000.00	P 550.00
XII	February 3, 2006 2:00 PM Kañao Room	Lube Oil Requirement of Palawan Area Plants for CY 2006	HO-PWN-05-030	5,456,010.00	P 2,200.00
XIII		One (1) Year Supply of Lube Oil of Catanduanes/Masbate/Albay Operations Division for CY 2006	CMAOD-05-080	20,043,240.76	P 5,500.00
XIV		Lube Oil Requirement of MQNL Plants for CY 2006	NL-MON-05-45	5,076,000.00	P 2,200.00
XV		Lube Oils for Power Barge 120	HO-B20-05-098	3,192,000.00	P 1,100.00

NOTE: A Pre-bidding Conference will be held for the following bidding schedules:

Schedule	Date	Time	Place
Schedule I – VI	January 17, 2006	2:00 P.M.	Kañao Room
Schedule VII – XV	January 20, 2006	2:00 P.M.	Pahiyas Room

10. NPC reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION
THE BAC, MMSD – SECRETARIAT
Materials Management Department
Materials Management Services Division
Agham Rd. cor. Quezon Avenue
Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No. 921-6048, 921-3541 Loc. 5599 & 5477
mltriñanes@napocor.gov.ph
Fax No. 921-6048 • http://www.napocor.gov.ph

(Sgd.) LORENZO S. MARCELO
Chairman, BAC-MMSD

(PDI – January 7 & 13, 2006)

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, the recognized leader in the newspaper industry with its **balanced news and fearless views** is committed to helping our trade partners achieve its business goals and serving the community via generation of employment.

We are in need of

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SUPERVISORS

to work for our Distributor Partner in the areas of Pampanga, Bataan, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija and Zambales.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

✓ **Will handle a sub-distributor partner to grow the business.**

QUALIFICATIONS:

- College graduates from the localities;
- Highly motivated; Aggressive; Hardworking;
- Must possess excellent oral and written communication skills both in English and Filipino;
- Preferably Male, willing to work on a graveyard shift, fast-paced, dynamic and flexible environment.

☐ Background in sales is not necessary, but a plus..

Send your ***Resume*** to **GQY Distribution Group Inc.** at
**GQY Distributors Inc., Dolores Homesite Extension, Dolores,
San Fernando Pampanga**

or call/fax 045-9614048 and look for **Mr. Mar Manabat or Mr. Jess Yap.**
You can email it to
jessy@mail.irnet.net.ph or qdydistribution.com.ph

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Please be informed that the series of Sales Counselor's Temporary Receipt (SCTR) of Philam Plans Inc. listed below are missing. Henceforth, any transactions entered into, using the said Sales Counselor's Temporary Receipt shall no longer be honored.

SCTR#

2481051
4868868
4916301
5031584
5031594
5031600
5222097
5371248
5663187
5663193
103786 - 103790
158706 - 158710
2095951 - 2096000
2577251 - 2577300
271981 - 271985
372940 - 372960
3797481 - 3797500
3797721 - 3797740
38150301 - 3815320
398926 - 398930
4025341 - 4025360
4295541 - 4295560
4327181 - 4327200
4415961 - 4415964
4762041 - 4762060
4891041 - 4891060
4950861
4950880
5084570 - 5084590
5141881 - 514887
5158501 - 5158520
5392881 - 5392900
5449316
5459215 - 5459219
706001 - 706050
BF2002436 - BF2002440
BT0006721 - BT0006740
BT20012881 - BT2002900
OF20000034
OF30000401
OT20000009
OT20000010
OT20000013
OT20000014
OT20000015
OT20000284
OT20000285
OT20000286
OT20000288
OT30000801 - OT30000820
OT30001086
OT30001790
OT30003111 - OT30003112
OT30003491
5478001-5478020
5391638-5391636
5225250
4571281-4571300
5225804
194236-194240
5450061-5450080
OT30001752
2028955
4313961-4313980
4387521-4387540
4387981-4388000
4555781-4555800
5484988
5483021-5483040
4023962
5664930
4314934

PHILAM PLANS

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Male at 28 and above. A graduate of any 5 years Engineering courses in any prestigious Universities in Manila. Have a 3 to 5 years related experience in Manufacturing firm. Knowledge in Injection Machine operation. Can speak Mandarin, Fokien. Should be fluent in English. Can work in a minimum supervision and willing to work overtime.

MOLD DESIGN SUPERVISOR

Male/Female 37 and above. A graduate of Mold Designing. Experience in Tool and Die and Technology in any mold manufacturer. Actual experience in EDM repairs technology. Can speak Mandarin, Fokien. Should be fluent in English. Can work in a minimum supervision and willing to work overtime.

MECHANICAL ENGINEER

Single, Male/Female, not more than 27 years old. A graduate of Mechanical Engineering or any engineering ocurses. Willing to work and relocate in Subic Bay. Must have license. Can work in a pressure-driven environment. Willing to work long-hours overtime, even Sunday and holiday. Smart, Outspoken, Aggressive and aims high in life.

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Tel. # 047-252-5394 to 96 and
look for Ms. Arlene Barba**

BOARD OF INVESTMENTS
dti TRADE & INDUSTRY

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that **LOGICALL, INC.** is applying for registration with the Board of Investments (BOI) as New IT Export Service Firm in the field of Call Center on a Pioneer Status with project/plant site located at 1133 Chino Roces Avenue, corner Metropolitan Avenue, Makati City.

Any person with valid objection/s on the above-mentioned project may file his/her objection in writing, under oath, with the BOI within three (3) days from the date of this publication.

(Sgd.) **RUDY B. CAÑA**
Director
Project Evaluation and
Registration Department

Industry & Investments Building,
385 Sen. Gil J. Puyat Ave., Makati City, Philippines
Tel.: (632) 897-6682 Fax No.: (632) 895-3521 (IPG)
(632) 895-3981 (IG) (632) 895-3978 (TSG)
(632) 890-3051 (AD)
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(PDI - Jan. 7, 2006)

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  - Competitive Salaries and Excellent Benefits
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- Qualified candidates must satisfy the following:
  - Diploma / Certificate / Degree holder in Electronic or Mechanical Engineering
  - Minimum experience of 2 years and strong troubleshooting skills
  - Pass a medical exam/background check
  - Willing to work in any Middle East country (Qatar, UAE, Yemen, Oman)
  - Good communication in English (verbal and written)
  - Able to work long hours and flexible work schedule
  - Possess good knowledge of computer system/hardware/software

For applicants who fit the above requirements, please send your CV with picture by email to rewglmsdm@slb.com. Only e-mail applications will be reviewed. Tests/interviews for qualified candidates will be conducted on the 13" to 16" of-Jan-2006 in Manila.

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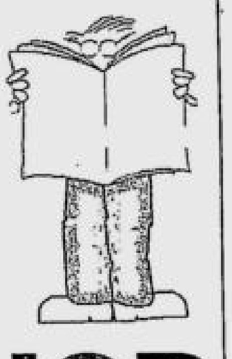

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LABORATORY – MATERIAL & GEOTECHNICAL ENGINEER, LAB TECHNICIAN	MECHANICAL & PURCHASING ENGINEER	BLASTER FOREMAN – ***experience in Middle East or Africa is preferred***

***Working experience in each category should be more than 3 yrs. ***
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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Trade and Industry
Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City

Department Administrative Order No. 07
Series of 2005

Subject: Devolution of Import–Related functions of the Garments and Textile Export Board to a One-Stop-Shop for Garments Lodged Under the Bureau of Export Trade Promotion

Whereas, Executive Order No. 285 dated 23 February 2004 directs the Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry to rationalize and streamline the operations of the GTEB and implement a winding up plan by 2005, and deactivates the Garments and Textile Export Board (GTEB) by 2005.

Whereas, in view of the deactivation of the GTEB by 2005, there is a need to devolve the functions of licensing raw material importations, Bonded Manufacturing Warehouses (BMW) and Common Bonded Manufacturing Warehouses (CBMW), accreditation of garment exporters as members of CBMW and accreditation/ registration of subcontractors to other appropriate agency of the Department;

Whereas, the integration of the garments and textile sector into the mainstream machinery of government for import facilitation will need familiarization of stakeholders, and the DTI shall, for the meantime, maintain the import-related licensing functions of GTEB until subsequently integrated.

NOW, THEREFORE, in the context of the following premises and in order to ensure effective implementation and smooth transition or devolution of functions, the following are hereby prescribed:

Section 1. The import–related functions of the GTEB is hereby devolved to a One-Stop-Shop for Garments lodged under the Bureau of Export Trade Promotion.

Section 2. There is hereby created a Garments and Textile Import Services (GTIS) Division under the One-Stop-Shop for Garments lodged with the BETP who shall perform and exercise the functions and authority relative to the issuance of license to import raw materials, license to operate a Bonded Manufacturing Warehouse (BMW)/ Common Bonded Manufacturing Warehouse (CBMW), accreditation of garment exporters as member of CBMW and accreditation/ registration of subcontractors.

Section 3. GTIS Special Committee. There is hereby created a GTIS Special Committee to be composed of the Department Secretary as Chair, and the Supervising Senior Undersecretary for International Trade and the Supervising Undersecretary for Industry and Investments, as members. The GTIS Special Committee shall act as the policy-making body of the Department on all import-related matters relative to exports of garments and textile.

Section 4. GTIS Inter-Agency Executive Committee. In addition, there is hereby created a GTIS Inter-Agency Executive Committee to be composed of three (3) Department Directors: the Executive Director of the Board of Investments Industry Development Group as Chair, the Assistant Director of the Bureau of Export Trade Promotion – Product Group and the Deputy Executive Director of the Export Development Council, as members. The GTIS Inter-Agency Executive Committee shall oversee the operations of the GTIS division and ensure that all actions of the GTIS division are in conformity with the rules and regulations on import-related services.

Section 5. Supervision. The GTIS Inter-Agency Executive Committee shall exercise operational supervision over the GTIS Division. Its responsibility and authority shall emanate from the GTIS Special Committee. On the other hand, the Bureau of Export Trade Promotion shall be limited to administrative supervision.

Section 6. Rules and Regulations on Garments and Textile Import Services (R and R on GTIS). The operations of the GTIS Division shall be governed by the R and R on GTIS. All actions and decisions of the GTIS Inter-Agency Executive Committee shall strictly adhere to the R and R on GTIS. The GTIS Special Committee shall have the authority to review and revise said R and R.

Section 7. Transition. A Transition Team from the GTEB shall assist and train the GTIS Division personnel during the first quarter of 2006 as part of the carry-over function of GTEB.

Section 8. Effectivity and Repealing Clause. – This Order shall be published in two (2) newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines and shall take effect immediately after its publication. All other Orders, Circulars, Memoranda, and Issuances inconsistent herewith are hereby revoked, cancelled or modified accordingly, otherwise they shall have supplementary effect.

Done in the City of Makati, Philippines this 27th day of December 2005.

(Sgd) Peter B. Favila
Secretary

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Trade and Industry
Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City

GARMENTS AND TEXTILE IMPORT SERVICES
RULES AND REGULATIONS

Pursuant to Sections 1 and 2 of Executive Order No. 285, in conjunction with the pertinent provisions of Executive Order No. 292 (Administrative Code) and Executive Order No. 133, and for efficient administration and proper execution of the laws, the following are the Garments and Textile Import Services (GTIS) Rules and Regulations:

RULE 1
TITLE, CONSTRUCTION AND DEFINITION

SECTION 1 -- TITLE

These shall be known as the Garments and Textile Import Services Rules and Regulations, implementing the provisions of Department Administrative Order No. 07, devolving the import-related functions of Garments and Textiles Export Board (GTEB) to a One-Stop Shop for Garments Lodged Under the Bureau of Export Trade Promotion.

SECTION 2 – CONSTRUCTION

These rules shall be liberally construed in order to promote its objectives, facilitate export, and assist exporters in the manufacture and export of garments from the Philippines.

SECTION 3 – DEFINITION OF TERMS

For purposes of these Rules, the following shall be defined:

a. **Garments and Textile Import Services (GTIS) Division hereinafter known as the GTISD** - a division created under the One-Stop-Shop for Garments of the Bureau of Export Trade Promotion who shall perform and exercise the functions and authority of the GTEB relative to the issuance of license to import raw materials, license to operate Bonded Manufacturing Warehouse (BMW)/ Common Bonded Manufacturing Warehouse (CBMW), accreditation of garment exporters as member of CBMW and accreditation/ registration of subcontractors

b. **GTIS Special Committee hereinafter known as GTIS-SC** – A special committee created under Department Administrative Order No. 07 composed of the Department Secretary, as Chair and the Supervising Undersecretary for International Trade and the Supervising Undersecretary for Industry and Investments Group, as members. The GTIS-SC shall act as the policy-making body of the Department on all import-related matters

c. **GTIS Inter-Agency Executive Committee hereinafter known as the GTIS IA Excom** – A committee composed of the Executive Director of the Infrastructure and other Industrial Goods Department, as Chairman, Assistant Director of the Bureau of Export Trade Promotion-Product Group and Deputy Executive Director of the Export Development Council, as members. The GTIS IA Excom shall oversee the operation of the GTISD and ensure that all actions of the GTISD are in conformity with the rules and regulations on import-related services.

d. **Accreditation** – Procedure set by the GTIS-SC whereby an exporter becomes a member of a CBMW or a subcontractor becomes eligible to undertake a subcontracting job for a garment manufacturer.

e. **Bonded Manufacturing Warehouse** – Includes the premises, rooms, compartments and other areas necessary for storing, processing and manufacturing of imported raw materials, accessories, supplies under bond and by-products or wastages incident thereto

f. **Bonded Manufacturing Warehouse (BMW) License** – Authority granted to a person, firm or corporation to operate a *Bonded Manufacturing Warehouse*.

g. **Common Bonded Manufacturing Warehouse (CBMW) License** – Authority granted to a BMW operator person, firm or corporation to service the importation requirements of garment exporters which are not BMW operators.

h. **Consignment Basis** – Method of importation and/or local procurement whereby a foreign principal buyer consigns raw materials, accessories and supplies, free of charge, to local garment manufacturer-exporter who shall assume responsibility for its manufacture into finished garments to be exported to specified buyers abroad

i. **Days** - Calendar days.

j. **Direct Purchase** – Method of importation and/or local procurement whereby a manufacturer-exporter pays for the new raw materials, accessories, and supplies The title to the imported and /or locally procured materials is vested in the manufacturer-exporter

k. **Export Performance** – Actual exports made in a year/ period supported by proofs of shipment such as bill of lading or airway bills.

l. **Import License** – Authority issued to manufacturer-exporter to import tax and duty free regulated raw materials, accessories and supplies for the manufacture and export of textile and/ or textile products, without need of further endorsement from other government agencies

m. **Import License Value** – Value of raw materials that may be imported by a manufacturer-exporter against a particular import license under the bulk importation scheme.

n. **Job-Order** – The method of importation where raw materials, accessories, and supplies may be imported based on specific export order(s)

o. **Liberalized System of Importation (Bulk Importation)**- Method of importation where raw materials, accessories, and supplies may be imported in bulk to enable the manufacture-exporter to stock desired materials that may be used in the manufacture and export of textiles and /or textile products

p. **Local Value Added (LVA)**- F.O.B. value less cost of imported raw materials, accessories, and supplies.

q. **Garment Manufacturer-Exporter**- Person, firm or corporation duly registered with the GTIS-SC which manufactures textiles and/or textile products for export.

r. **Operator** – Manufacturer-exporter who operates a Bonded Manufacturing Warehouse or Common Bonded Manufacturing Warehouse.

s. **R.A. 3137 (Bulk Importation)** – Act authorizing a manufacturer-exporter licensed by the Embroidery and Apparel Board to receive consigned raw materials from foreign principal with the condition that the same shall be manufactured into finished textiles and/or textile products and exported to the buyer designated by the principal abroad

t. **Raw Materials, Accessories, and Supplies** – Textiles and related materials, such as, but not limited to, fabrics, (in precut or continuous forms), yarns, leather materials, trimmings, accessories and supplies necessary for the manufacture and export of garments. These do not include remnants.

u. **Subcontractor**- Person, firm or corporation who performs any production process for a manufacturer or exporter.

SECTION 4 - COVERAGE - These rules and regulations shall govern:

a. Issuance of license to garment exporters to import tax and duty free raw materials under a bonded warehousing system

b. Issuance of license to garment exporters to operate a Bonded Manufacturing Warehouse (BMW).

c. Issuance of license to garment exporters to operate a Common Bonded Manufacturing Warehouse (CBMW).

d. Accreditation of garment exporters applying as members of a CBMW for tax and duty free importation of materials.

e. Accreditation and registration of subcontractors for purposes of moving bonded raw materials from BMWs/CBMWs for a specific manufacturing process

RULE II
BONDED MANUFACTURING WAREHOUSE (BMW)

SECTION 1 – REQUIREMENTS

The following are the requirements for application for operation of a bonded manufacturing warehouse (BMW):

a. Track record of annual FOB US$1.0 M Export Sales (actual or projected)

b. Capacity to produce annual export sales of US$1.0 M either in-house or through subcontractors

c. Confirmation of orders by principals/buyers.

d. Submission of plan (blueprint) of the proposed BMW showing and describing the size, layout and location of the proposed premises

e. Must have no previous record of violation of the Tariff and Customs Code nor any pending case for violation of the GTIS-SC, or of its precursor agency, and Bureau of Customs (BOC) Rules and Regulations.

SECTION 2 – CONDITIONS

The following are the conditions for the operation of a BMW:

a. All garment and apparel articles manufactured in whole or in part out of bonded raw materials and intended for exportation may be manufactured in whole or in part in a bonded manufacturing warehouse; provided that the manufacturer-exporter of such articles has secured a permit from the GTIS-SC to operate such warehouse and has posted a bond from a reputable bonding company acceptable to the Bureau of Customs guaranteeing faithful compliance with all laws, rules and regulations applicable thereto.

b. Extension and expansion of a BMW shall be licensed only if the established capacity of the present facility has been utilized.

c. A BMW license shall be valid for a period of two (2) years and shall be renewable every two (2) years.

d. A BMW shall pay the following fees:
   1. Filing fee of P500.00.
   2. P5,000.00 fee upon issuance of the BMW license or any extension of such warehouse.

SECTION 3 – RENEWAL

A BMW license may be renowed upon compliance with the requirements and conditions provided under the Sections 1 and 2 of this rules and regulations and upon payment of the following fees:

1. Renewal fee of P5,000.00 to be paid upon approval of its application for renewal of BMW license.
2. Extension/Renewal fee of P5,000.00 for every BMW extension.

The GTIS-SC shall have the prerogative to waive compliance with any of the foregoing conditions in meritorious cases. In the event that the BMW operator fails to comply with the requirements for renewal of the BMW license due to meritorious reasons, it may be given a period of two (2) years within which to comply with the said requirements. During this period the GTIS-SC may allow the continuous operation of the BMW upon payment by its operator of a forbearance fee of Ten Thousand Pesos (P10,000.00).

RULE III
COMMON BONDED MANUFACTURING WAREHOUSE (CBMW)

SECTION 1 – REQUIREMENTS. The following are the requirements for the issuance of a CBMW license;

a. The applicant manufacturer-exporter shall submit a plan (blueprint) of the proposed CBMW showing and describing the size, layout and location of the proposed premises.

b. Applicant manufacturer-exporter and its principal officers and/or directors must have no previous record of violation of the Tariff and Customs Code nor any pending case for violation of GTIS-SC, or of its precursor agency, and BOC Rules and Regulations. The GTIS-SC may order an audit of the manufacturer-exporter and its stockholders should it deem necessary.

c. Applicant manufacturer-exporter shall undertake that the construction of the CBMW is in conformity with the specifications as required by the GTIS-SC and BOC.

d. Applicant manufacturer-exporter shall be required to submit a viability study containing information on the following aspects of its operation;
   1. Organizational data on management structure.
   2. Data on personnel, operational and control procedures, plant facilities/warehouse specifications, machineries, services offered to members and service rates.
   3. Financial Statements and ratio including assumptions used as bases of projections.
   4. Marketing Data on potential clients or accredited member.

SECTION 2 – A CBMW shall pay the following fees:

a. Filing fee- P1,000

b. P50,000 fee upon issuance of CBMW license.

c. P2,500 annual fee.

SECTION 3 – CONDITIONS

CBMW may operate under the following conditions:

a. The CBMW operator shall pay a CBMW license fee of Fifty Thousand Pesos (P50,000.00) upon the issuance of a license to operate a CBMW or any extension thereof.

b. The CBMW operator shall apply with GTIS-SC for the accreditation of its proposed members.

c. The CBMW operator shall secure an Import License (IL) from GTIS-SC prior to the importations of raw materials for the account of its accredited members.

d. The fabrics imported by the CBMW operator for the account of its accredited members must be cut-to-pattern or panel cut as approved by BOC prior to the release therein to the accredited members.

e. The CBMW operator shall be directly responsible for the liquidation of all raw materials imported through its CBMW.

f. The CBMW facilities shall be used solely to service the importation requirements of its accredited members.

g. The transfer of imported raw materials, accessories, and supplies in the following instances shall require prior approval from BOC
   1. Transfer of materials imported by the CBMW operator through its own BMW to any of its accredited members.
   2. Transfer from one accredited member to another

h. The CBMW operator shall pay an annual fee of P2,500.00 not later than end of 1st quarter of the year.

i. The CBMW license shall be valid for as long as the CBMW operator complies with the foregoing conditions.

j. A CBMW operator desiring to discontinue the operations of its CBMW shall file written application with the GTIS-SC.

SECTION 4 – ACCREDITATION OF MEMBERS OF CBMW

Manufacturer-exporter who are not BMW operators may import raw materials, accessories, and supplies to be manufactured into textiles and/or textile products for export through CBMW. Provided that the garment firms are duly accredited with the GTIS-SC as manufacturer-exporter and accredited members of the CBMW through which the importation shall be made.

SECTION 5 – CONDITIONS FOR ACCREDITATION

A CBMW Accreditation is subject to the following conditions:

a. Documentary requirements
   1. A plan showing and describing the size, layout, and location of the premises of the intended member;
   2. Records to update requirements for registration as manufacturer-exporter.

b. Terms and Conditions
   1. Applications for the accreditation of member of CBMW shall be filed with the GTIS-SC by the CBMW operator
   2. A manufacturer-exporter shall at any one time be accredited with only one common bonded manufacturing warehouse.
   3. The accredited member shall pay an accreditation fee of P500.00.
   4. The accredited member shall maintain at all times in its place of business and make available for inspection its books of accounts and records of imported materials.
   5. The warehouse/place of business of the accredited member shall be made accessible to all authorized GTIS-SC officials or representatives upon presentation of an approved mission order or proper demand for ocular inspection.
   6. The accredited member shall secure the materials imported through the CBMW against pilferage and loss thru fires, floods, and other such occurrences.
   7. The imported raw materials shall be cut-to-pattern or panel cut (requires BOC approval) in the CBMW prior to release to the accredited member.
   8. The GTIS-SC shall conduct periodic inspections of the facilities of the CBMW.
   9. The transfer of imported raw materials in the following instances shall require prior approval from the BOC.
      a. The transfer of imported materials by the CBMW operator through its own BMW to any of its accredited member
      b. Transfer of imported raw materials from one accredited member to another.
   10. The accredited member shall not issue materials to subcontractors who are not registered with the GTIS-SC
   11. The list of raw materials previously approved by the GTIS-SC may be updated by the CBMW operator should any other raw material not originally on the list be needed
   12. The accreditation of a member of a CBMW which has not applied for nor effected importation within a minimum period of twelve months shall be considered cancelled without prejudice to filing another application for accreditation
   13. A Letter of No Objection from CBMW operator may be required to terminate membership of the CBMW member
   14. The GTIS-SC shall have the prerogative to waive compliance with any of the foregoing conditions in meritorious cases.
   15. The GTIS-SC reserves the right to cancel for just cause the accreditation of any member violating any of the provisions of this Rules and Regulations

RULE IV
REVOCATION OF BMW/CBMW LICENSE

SECTION 1 – REVOCATION OF BMW/CBMW LICENSE

The license to operate a BMW/CBMW may be revoked on grounds of non-compliance with the requirements and conditions for the establishment and operation of the BMW/ CBMW

SECTION 2 – SURRENDER OF BMW/CBMW LICENSE

License to operate BMW/CBMW may be surrendered upon application with the GTIS-SC by its operator before the expiration of the existing license.

SECTION 3 – PROCEDURES WHEN BMW/CBMW LICENSE IS REVOKED/ SURRENDERED

The following rules shall be applied in the event the license to operate a BMW/CBMW is revoked by the GTIS-SC or otherwise surrendered by the operator.

1. Importation of raw materials made through a BMW/CBMW by an operator whose license is revoked shall be limited to balances of import licenses issued prior to revocation and shall be effected within the validity period of the corresponding import licenses or within six months from date of revocation, whichever comes later Provided that the importation shall be subject to the rules and regulation on exportation and liquidation of imported materials. Provided further, that the exportation period shall not be extendible
2. An inventory of the materials imported and stored in the BMW/CBMW shall be conducted jointly by representatives from GTIS-SC/ BOC Audit Team, after the exportation period of the last importation has expired. Provided that the GTIS-SC may require all bonded goods remaining in the warehouse to be placed under the Customs guard and subject such to all terms and conditions that the GTIS-SC may require.

   A motion for reconsideration of the GTIS-SC's revocation may be filed with the GTIS-SC on or before the expiration of the validity date of the last Import License issued prior to the revocation of the BMW/CBMW license. Subject manufacturer-exporter shall submit within the period prescribed herein proofs of compliance with the requirements/criteria used as basis for the GTIS-SC decision.

SECTION 4 – AUDIT OF BMW/CBMW

The GTIS-SC/BOC Audit Team shall conduct a regular audit of the operations of the BMW/ CBMW operators for purposes of monitoring imported materials and determining compliance with this Rules and Regulations.

The GTIS-SC shall refer to the BOC any common/bonded manufacturing warehouse operator who failed to account for all imported materials.

RULE V
ACCREDITATION/REGISTRATION OF SUBCONTRACTORS

The manufacturer-exporter can accredit and at the same time register its subcontractor.

SECTION 1 – ACCREDITATION

The following are qualified to be accredited with the GTIS-SC as subcontractor:

a. Manufacturer-exporter duly registered with the SEC and/or the DTI and who manufactures and exports textile and textile product.

b. Garment firm duly registered with the SEC and/or the DTI.

SECTION 2 – ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS- A certificate of accreditation shall be issued by the GTIS-SC to qualified subcontractors after satisfying the following requirements:

a. Duly accomplished Application Form
b. Copy of the Business Name Registration certificate
c. SEC Registration certificate
d. Articles of Partnership/Incorporation
e. Mayors Permit or Certificate of Registration under R.A. 6810
f. Location map
g. List of machines
h. Ocular inspection conducted by GTIS-SC or Regional/Provincial DTI Representative on the facilities of the applicant firm.
i. Filing fee of P100.00
j. Acceptance of Terms and Conditions for Accreditation

The Certificate of Accreditation shall be valid for one (1) year from the date of issue

SECTION 3 – REGISTRATION

Only the manufacturer- exporter who shall avail of the services of a duly accredited subcontractor can register it with the GTIS-SC.

SECTION 4 – REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

A certificate of registration shall be issued by the GTIS-SC after satisfying the following requirements:

a. Duly accomplished Application Form
b. Certificate of Accreditation as Subcontractor
c. Annual registration fee of P50.00.

The Certificate of Registration issued shall be co-terminus with the validity of the subcontractors accreditation.

SECTION 5 – OCULAR INSPECTION- Applicant firm shall be subject to ocular inspection

RULE VI
IMPORT LICENSING OF RAW MATERIALS

SECTION 1 – RAW MATERIALS

Importation of raw materials, except accessories and supplies shall be covered by an Import License issued by the GTIS-SC. Importation of raw materials for sample purposes exceeding P10,000.00 or its equivalent in US dollars shall require prior GTIS-SC approval.

SECTION 2 – QUALIFICATION

Only the following manufacturer-exporter shall be allowed to import, tax and duty free, raw materials, accessories and supplies.

a. Bonded Manufacturing Warehouse/ Common Bonded Manufacturing Warehouse operators

b. Accredited members of a Common Bonded Manufacturing Warehouse Operators.

SECTION 3 – IMPORTATION SCHEMES

Every manufacturer-exporter, except those operating in the Export Processing Zone may apply with the GTIS-SC for a license to import raw materials under the following schemes:

A. Job-Order Scheme

Qualified to import under the Job-Order Scheme:
1. New BMW operators and CBMW members
2. BMW operators and CBMW members with less than nine (9) months track record of exportation of imported raw materials

B. Liberalized System of Importation (Bulk Importation)

Qualified to import under the LSI Scheme are BMW operators and CBMW accredited members with at least nine (9) months track record of exportation of imported raw materials.

A firm importing under the Job-Order Scheme which achieves said track record shall automatically be shifted to the LSI scheme.

C. R.A. 3137 (Bulk Importation)

Qualified are BMW operators licensed by the Garments and Textile Export Board, or by its precursor agency, the Embroidery and Apparel Control and Inspection Board, and those BMW operators that may be qualified and licensed henceforth.

SECTION 4 – REQUIREMENTS

The following documents shall be submitted upon application for an Import License:

A. Job-Order
   1. Duly accomplished application form
   2. Duplicate original copy of Proforma Invoice
   3. Duplicate original copy of Purchase Order
   4. Computation of consumption of raw materials
   5. Computation of Foreign Exchange Realizable
   6. Sketch/ sample of the export product to be manufactured

B. Liberalized System of Importation/ R.A. 3137 (Bulk Importation)
   1. Duly accomplished application form
   2. Latest notarized report on inventory and usage of raw materials

SECTION 5 – BASIS FOR APPROVAL AND ISSUANCE OF IMPORT LICENSE

The following shall be the bases for the approval and issuance of an import license:

A. Job- Order
   1. Existence of confirmed export order

B. Liberalized System of Importation / RA 3137 (Bulk Importation)

The value of an import license to be issued under the bulk importation scheme shall be based on the Import License Value (ILV). The ILV, which shall be derived from the inventory report, shall be computed as follows:

$$ILV = X - (Y + Z)$$

Where X= Value of imported raw materials re-exported during the twelve-month period immediately preceding the date of application

Y= Value of inventory of imported raw materials, accessories and supplies not yet exported.

Z= Value of unutilized import licenses

C. RA 3137 (Bulk Importation)

The value of the import license to be issued under the RA 3137 scheme shall also be based on the Import License Value (ILV) computed as follows:

$$ILV = 1.5X - (Y + Z)$$

Where X= Value of imported raw materials re-exported during the twelve-month period immediately preceding the date of application.

Y= Value of inventory of imported raw materials, accessories and supplies not yet exported

Z= Value of unutilized import licenses

A manufacturer- exporter whose ILV is insufficient (less than US$500.00) or negative may file a request for import license under the bulk importation schemes provided the request is supported by export projections covered by confirmed export orders or letter of credit.

A manufacturer- exporter may apply for a new import license under the bulk importation schemes provided it meets any of the following conditions:
1. Utilization of at least two-thirds (2/3) of previous import license, or
2. One month before the expiry of previous import license which has only been partially utilized.

D. Importation of Pre-Cut Fabrics

Garment exporters may import pre-cut fabrics subject to submission of the following:
1. Letter-request to GTIS-SC to import pre-cut goods with justification.
2. Sample of pre-cut goods
3. Copies of Purchase orders and Pro-forma Invoices
4. Manufacturing Process
5. Sample or Sketch of Finished Goods
6. Import License where to charge the importation of pre-cut goods.
7. BOC Certification as to the balance of the IL where the importation of pre-cut goods shall be charged.

If said garment exporter is importing under the LSI scheme, the value of pre-cut fabrics that may be granted by GTIS-SC shall be charged to the balance of the IL at the time of request. Firm is required to submit a BOC Certification as to the balance of the IL where the importation of pre-cut fabrics shall be charged

E. Importation of Yarns

1. Requirements.
   a. Duplicate original copy of Proforma Invoice
   b. Duplicate original copy of Purchase Order
   c. Sketch/ actual sample of export product
   d. List of Subcontractors (Conversion from Yarn to Fabric and Fabric to Garments)
   e. Monthly Summary of Importation of Raw Materials
   f. Updated Inventory of Raw Materials
2. If the applicant manufacturer-exporter is importing under the LSI/ RA 3137 scheme the value of yarns that may be granted by GTIS-SC shall be charged to the balance of the IL at the time of request. The validity of the IL for firms importing under the LSI/RA3137 shall be the same as the validity of the IL where the importation was charged
3. If the garment exporter is importing under the JO scheme, the validity of the IL issued for yarn importation shall be 5 months from date of issue.

SECTION 6 – ALLOWANCE FOR WASTAGES

The following limits shall be used as guide in determining allowance for wastages:

Woven fabrics/ sub materials	3%
Accessories/ supplies	3%
Yarn to fabric to garments	10%
Knitted fabrics	10%
Pre-cut fabrics	1%

SECTION 7 – VALIDITY OF IMPORT LICENSE

An Import License shall have a validity period of nine (9) months from date of issue and shall not be extendible. Imported raw materials must arrive at the port of entry within the validity period of the Import License, otherwise, the same shall be considered as shipments without valid license

SECTION 8 – AMENDMENT OF IMPORT LICENSE

The importer shall file with GTIS-SC a request for an amendment prior to actual importation or arrival of goods in case of any change in the quantity, price, description, construction and width of the raw materials and of supplier.

SECTION 9 – REPORTORIAL REQUIREMENTS

All manufacturer- exporters shall submit to GTIS-SC an updated Notarized Report on the Usage and Inventory of Raw Materials. The report shall contain the value of approved import licenses, inventory and export/ utilization of raw materials

Manufacturer-exporters importing under the job-order scheme are required to submit the report on a quarterly basis while those importing under the LSI or RA 3137 schemes are required to submit the report upon application for an import license.

SECTION 10 - ENTRY AND LIQUIDATION OF RAW MATERIALS SHALL BE SUBJECT TO THE PERTINENT RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE BUREAU OF CUSTOMS.

RULE VII
EFFECTIVITY

Section 1 – Effectivity

These rules shall be effective starting January 01, 2006 after its publication in one newspaper of general circulation

Section 2 – Transitory Provision

License to import raw materials, license to operate Bonded Manufacturing Warehouse/ Common Bonded Manufacturing Warehouse and accreditation of subcontractors previously issued by the GTEB are hereby recognized during their period of validity.

Application for import licenses, new and/or renewal of BMW/CBMW licenses, accreditation as member of CBMWs and accreditation/registration of subcontractors shall be filed with the GTIS-SC effective January 1, 2006

Section 3 – Consultation with Industry Associations

The GTIS-SC shall consult the garment industry, through its various associations, on all policies, amendments and/or procedures, which are not stipulated in these Rules and Regulations. All new policies, procedures and/or amendments shall be published in at least one newspaper of general circulation, posted at the GTIS-SC Bulletin Board, and sent to all industry associations.

In all cases, any policy, procedure and/or amendment to be adopted shall take effect fifteen (15) days after date of publication.

Section 4 – Reservation Clause

Nothing herein shall be construed as precluding the GTIS-SC from enforcing these Rules in conducting inspection, investigation, evaluation, assessment and operations audit of the activities enunciated herein and in prescribing other requirements

Section 5 – Separability Clause

If, for any reason, any section or provision of these Rules is declared null and void by the competent authority, no other section, provision, or part thereof shall be affected and the same shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 6 – Repealing Clause

All previous Rules and Regulations inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly

Done this 27th day of December 2005.

Makati, Metro Manila

(Sgd) PETER B. FAVILA
Secretary

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Beyonder

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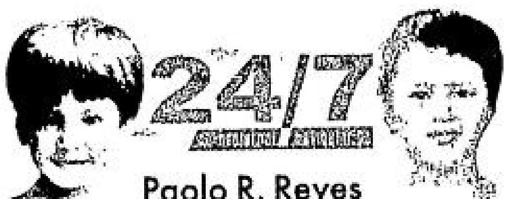

Paolo R. Reyes
Janine Cuenca-Dario

OUT WITH THE OLD ... IN WITH THE new! The giddy spirit of this brand new year gives us (and a few reliable insiders) the bravado to do just that: bold forecasts on the big trends of the year ahead. 2006 promises to be loads of fun for the open-minded partygoer. Happy New Year and happy hopping!

Parties

- iPod Parties iBring. iSpin. iDance. Therefore, iParty!
- Rock n' Dance—rockers dabble into DJing, and vice versa.
- Future Disco—a rad fusion of retro and electronica (think Madonna's new album Confessions on a Dance Floor).
- Bring on the bubbly! Champagne and sparkling wines will rule.
- Heightened exclusivity—a backlash to free-for-all open bar events celebrating ... uh ... nothing.
- The New Guard—a new generation of scenesters will surface en masse.

Bars and clubs

- **Fiamma**: Jupiter Street's new gem sparkles!
- **Citrus**: Louie Y's new baby. (It's V Bar with sophisticatedly tangy twist!)
- **Luce**: Cozy lounge with lip smacking *crispy pata* from the famed Insomnia.
- **Manila DJ Club**: Where the DJ is a demigod every night of the week.
- **Mezze**: Sizzling nightspot that seamlessly fuses the old and the new.

DJs

- **Paolo Maralit**: NBK's young house hero! A cool techie who creates music with his ubiquitous laptop.
- **Jon and Mark Naval**: Two brothers with big talent.
- **Mars Miranda**: Trailblazing R&B and hip-hop mover.
- **Karl Ty**: The Superman behind Superfly.
- **Benjo Marquez**: Multitalented *balikbayan* music meister.
- **Alessandra Tinio**: Spinning delicious "Panic" in the corridors of Zen.

Bands and artists

- **Up Dharma Down**: Sultry + riveting + raw = *mabuhay!*
- **Bitter Pill**: Pushing the dancepunk envelope with electrifying performances.
- **Juan Pablo Dream**: Fun, fresh and funky!
- **Sleepyheads**: Cool post-punk band with a stand-up drummer.
- **Nyko Maca**: Electrosamba, anyone? Or maybe some drum n' bossa?
- **Wild Mood Swings**: All-girl indie rock group with an edge.

Other Super! 24/7 events this week:

Jan. 7, Saturday

Daydream Cycle, Stonefree, Bagetsafonik, Analog, and Kompressor at Saguijo; Supermodel Saturdays at Embassy Club; Soundsgood DJs at Embassy Cuisine; Desi Nights at Bollywood; Massive Saturdays at Bed

Jan. 8, Sunday

Bloody Mary Sundays at Absinth; Patterned and Inscribed: The Art of Nelfa Querubin at UP Vargas Museum

Jan. 9, Monday

Parokya ni Edgar at '70s Bistro; Follies de Mwah at Club Mwah; Freeway at Suburbia

Jan. 10, Tuesday

Cosmic Love, Pinoy Stories, and Sino Sikat? at Saguijo; Panic with DJs Alessandra Tinio & Chi Castañeda at Zen; Spirit of '67 at Captain's Bar;

Jan. 11, Wednesday

Orange and Lemons at '70s Bistro; Up Dharma Down & Johnny Alegre Affinity at Mag:net Café Katipunan; Vixen Wednesdays with DJs Karl Ty & Cao Ocampo at Embassy Cuisine; DJ Patch at Absinth; DJ Mars Miranda at Embassy Club; Side A at Virgin Café;

Jan. 12, Thursday

Taiko! Tambol! with the Yamato Drummers of Japan at PETA Theater Center, QC; Brownman Revival at '70s Bistro; Breathless Beats with DJ Brit at Government; DJ Badboy Jeff at Temple

Jan. 13, Friday

Tabasco Yee Haw! Burn Survivor Bar Tour at Absinth, Il Ponticello, Bistro 110, Azzuro, Quisine, and Cable Car, all in Makati; True Faith at Virgin Café; The Jerks at 70s Bistro; Gogo Fridays at Bed; DJ Bliss at Prince of Jaipur

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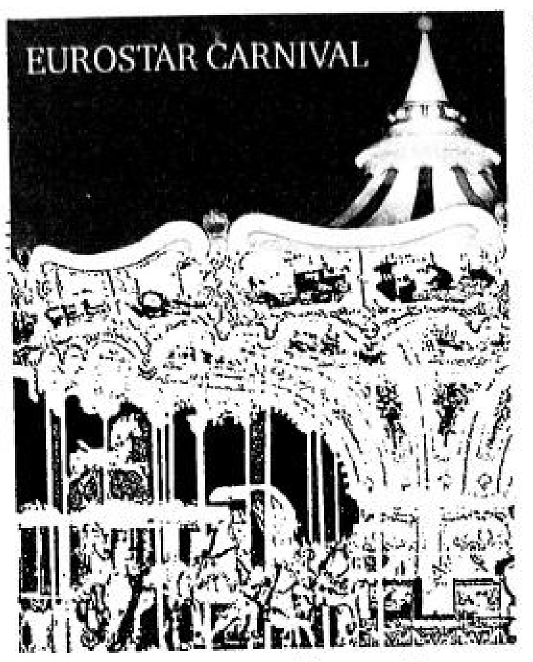
EUROSTAR CARNIVAL



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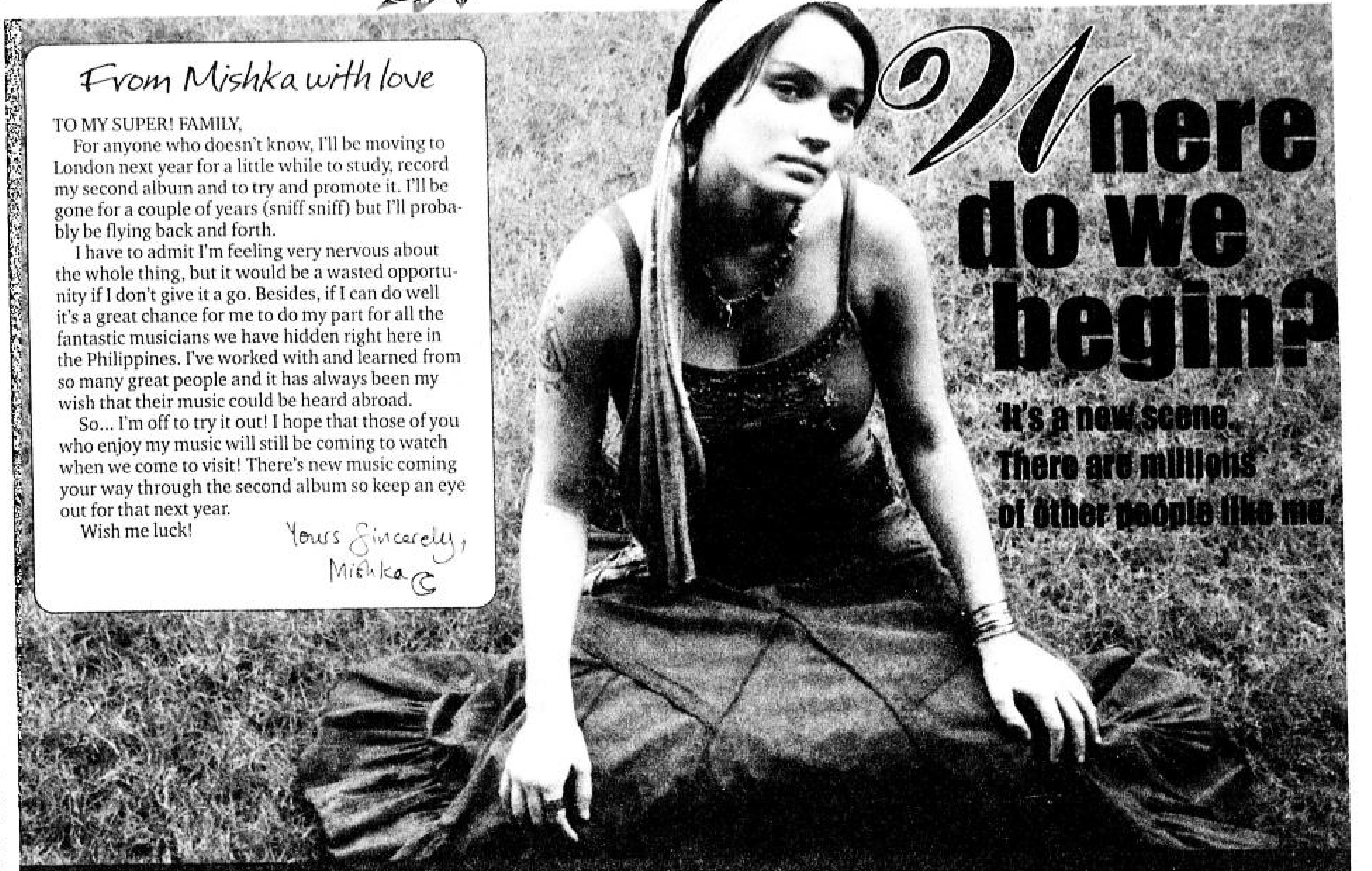

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Wish me luck!

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By Pepe Diokno
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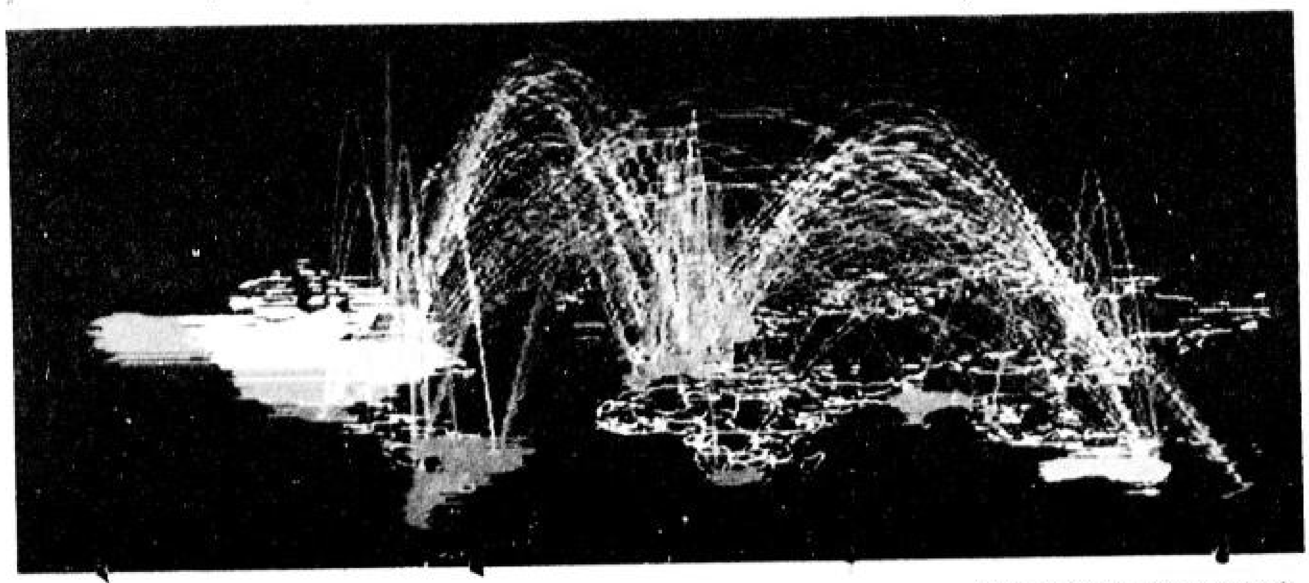

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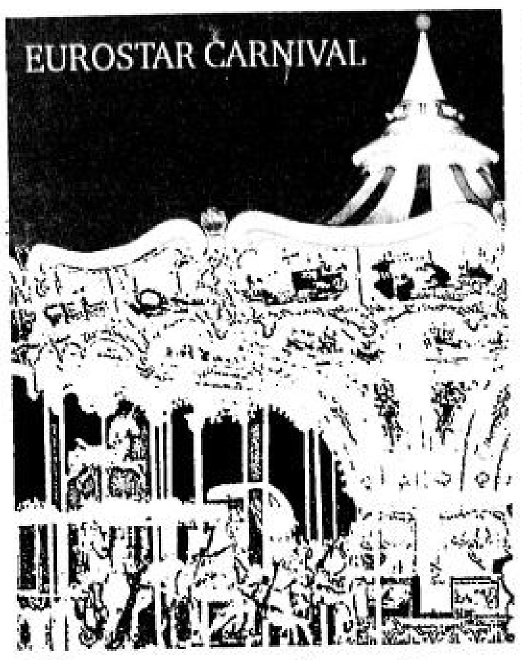

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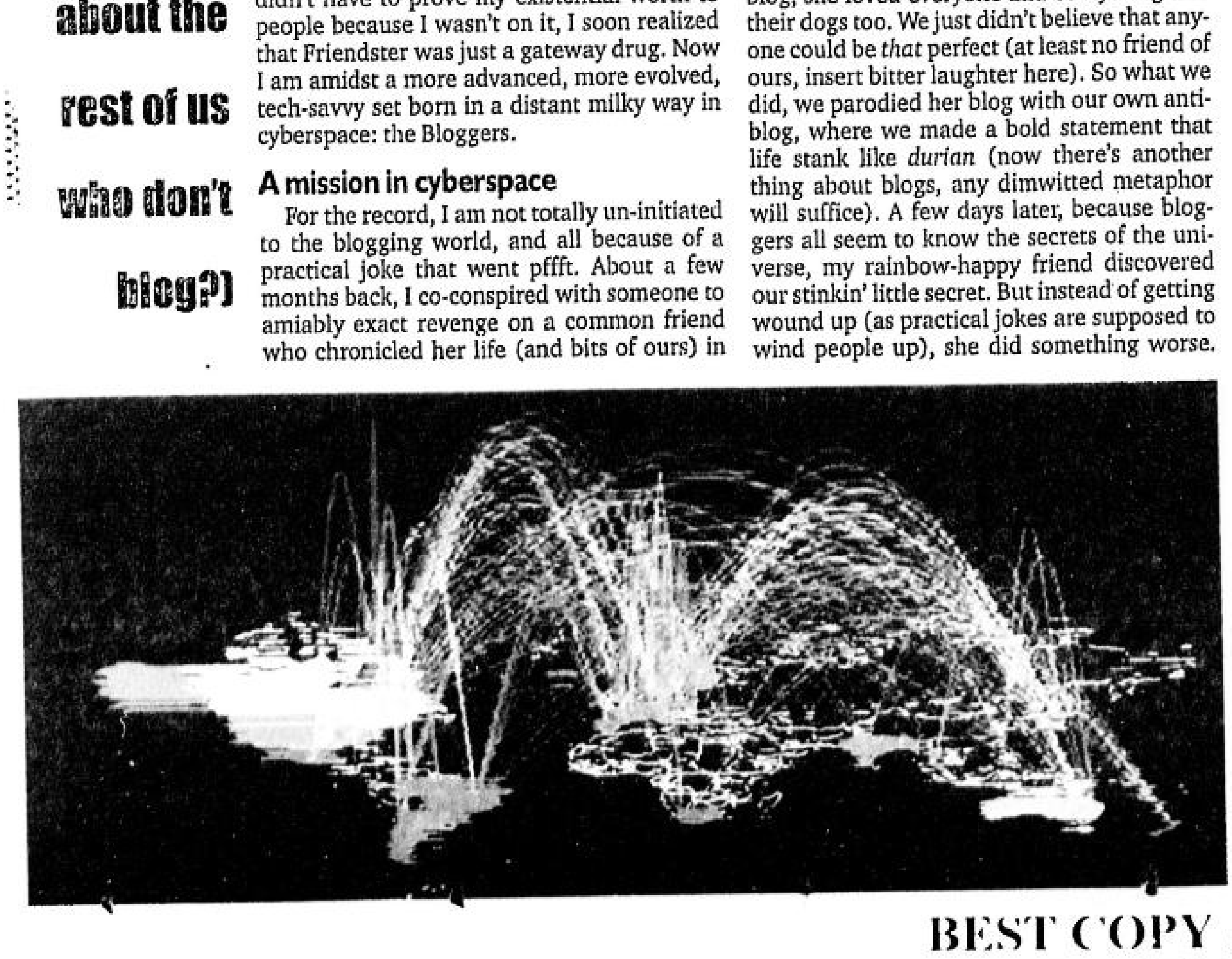

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GRAND OPENING TODAY

AT THE
FORT
TAGUIG CITY

EURO STAR
CARNIVAL

JANUARY
TO MARCH
2006

Meet Kris Aquino
and other celebrities
TODAY!!!!

RIDES OUT! FEEL THE RUSH!

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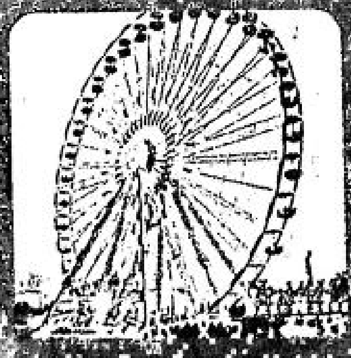
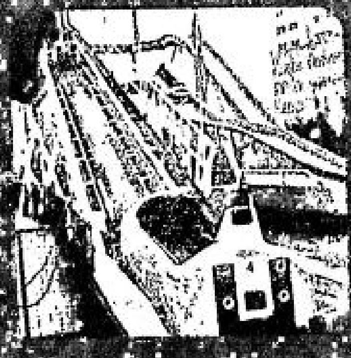
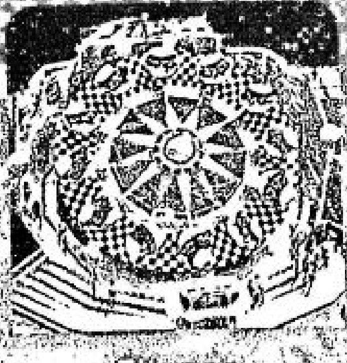
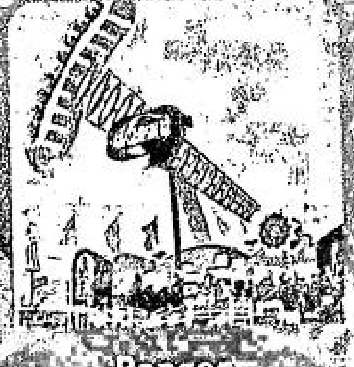

Giant Wheel


Flume

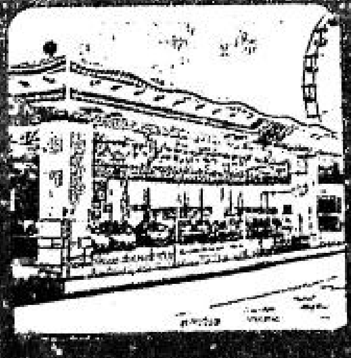
Carousel

Booster


Flipper

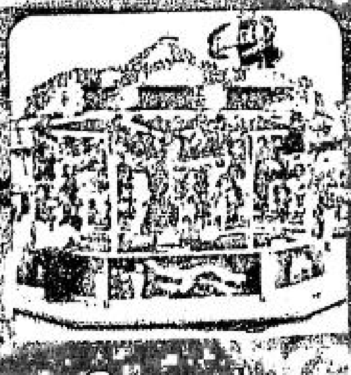

Ranger

Kiddie Swing


Bumpercar

Mini Pirate

G-force


Gamestalls

Gamestalls

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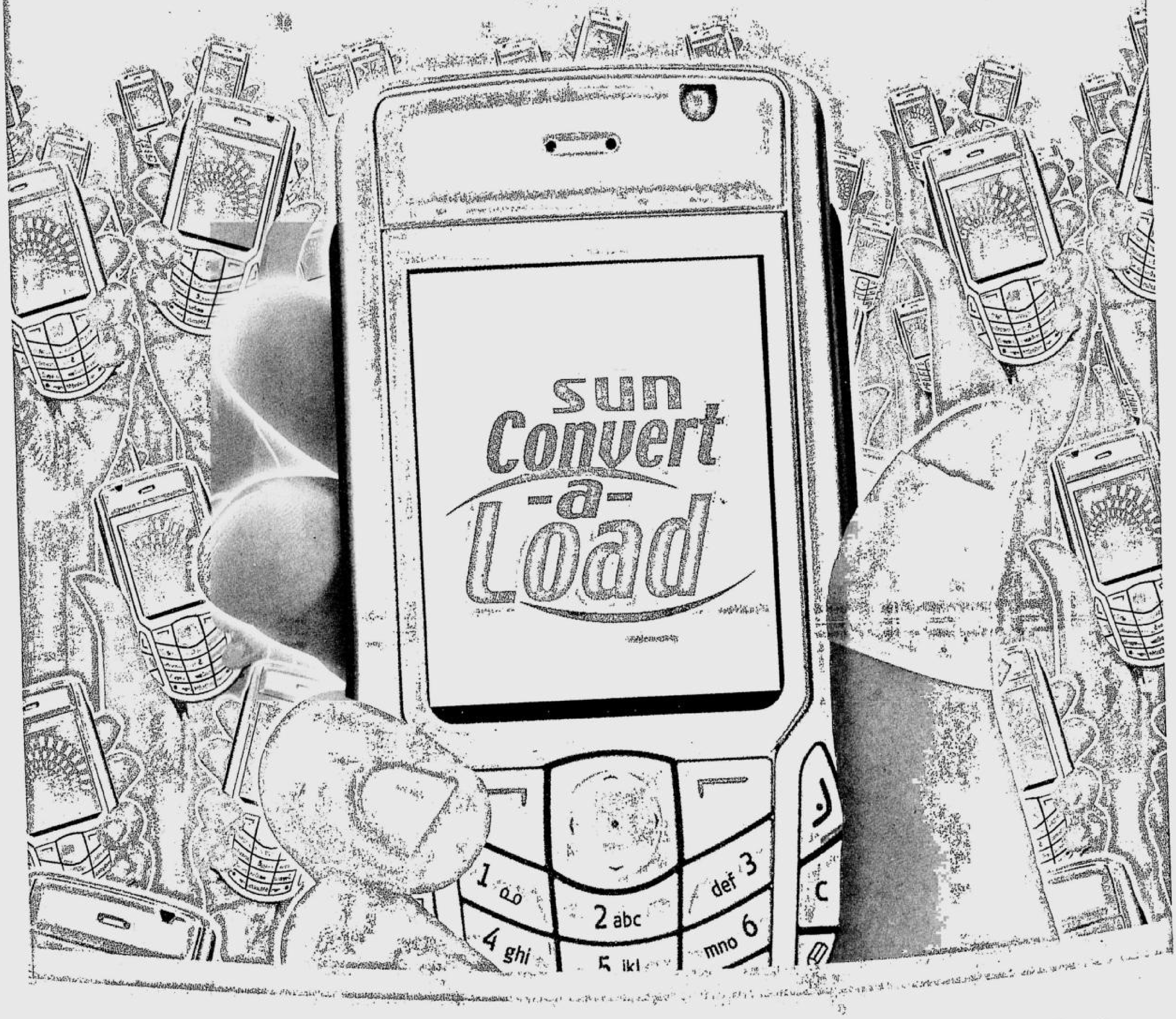
More texts to your pals on other networks

with



With Sun Convert-a-Load you'll get as much as 20 additional text messages to jam with your pals on other networks.

NOW IN EASY-ON-THE-POCKET DENOMINATIONS WITH MORE TEXTS!

Peso Load	Number of Texts *without* Sun Convert-a-Load	Number of Texts *with* Sun Convert-a-Load	Extra Texts	Validity Period
P 25	25	33	8	2 days
P 50	50	70	20	7 days

To convert you should have at least P25 regular load and follow this:

- Via SMS, Text CAL <space> **33** or **70** and send to 223
- Via The Mall, visit The Mall, Mall Assistant> My Account> Prepaid> Buy Convert-a-Load> CAL **33** or **70**

SO GET THAT THUMB MOVING AND CONVERT YOUR LOAD, NOW!

NOTE:

- Only regular loads via Regular Call Cards and Xpressload are eligible for Sun Convert-a-Load.
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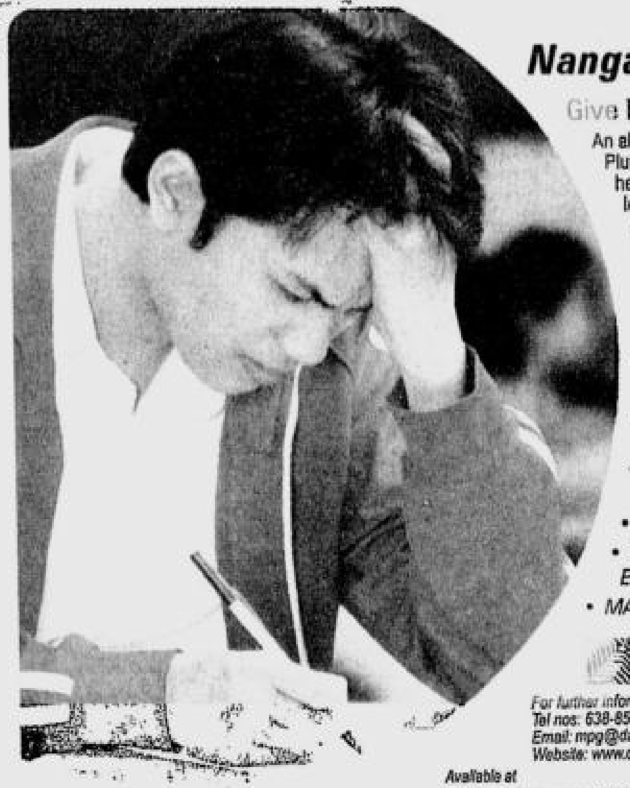
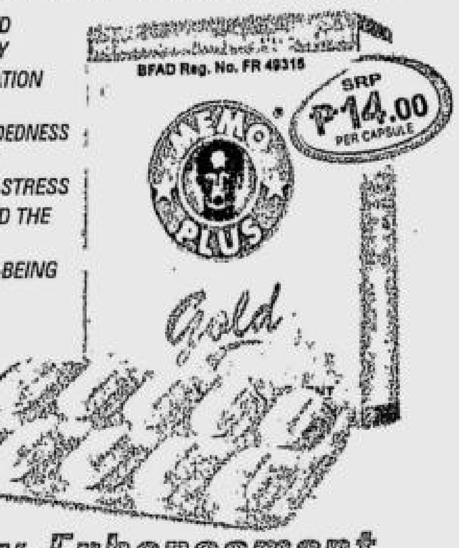
COTILLION DE HONOR. Diether Ocampo, Kristine Hermosa and Ben Chan—Happy 18th!

Bench endorsers thanksgiving party in celebration of its 18th year





Nangangamote ba sa school ang anak mo?

Give him a helping hand with Memo Plus Gold.

An all-natural herbal supplement developed from an ancient *Ayurvedic* formula, Memo Plus Gold contains the extract of *Brahmi* or *Becopa Monniera*, a memory-enhancing herb that improves nerve impulse transmission for better memory and enhanced learning capability.

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For best results, take one Memo Plus Gold capsule after a meal, twice a day, for three months. For maintenance, the ideal dose is one capsule a day after a meal.

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- REDUCE ANXIETY AND STRESS
- DECREASE SENILITY AND THE EFFECTS OF AGING
- MAINTAIN GENERAL WELL-BEING

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Email: mpg@davenben.com
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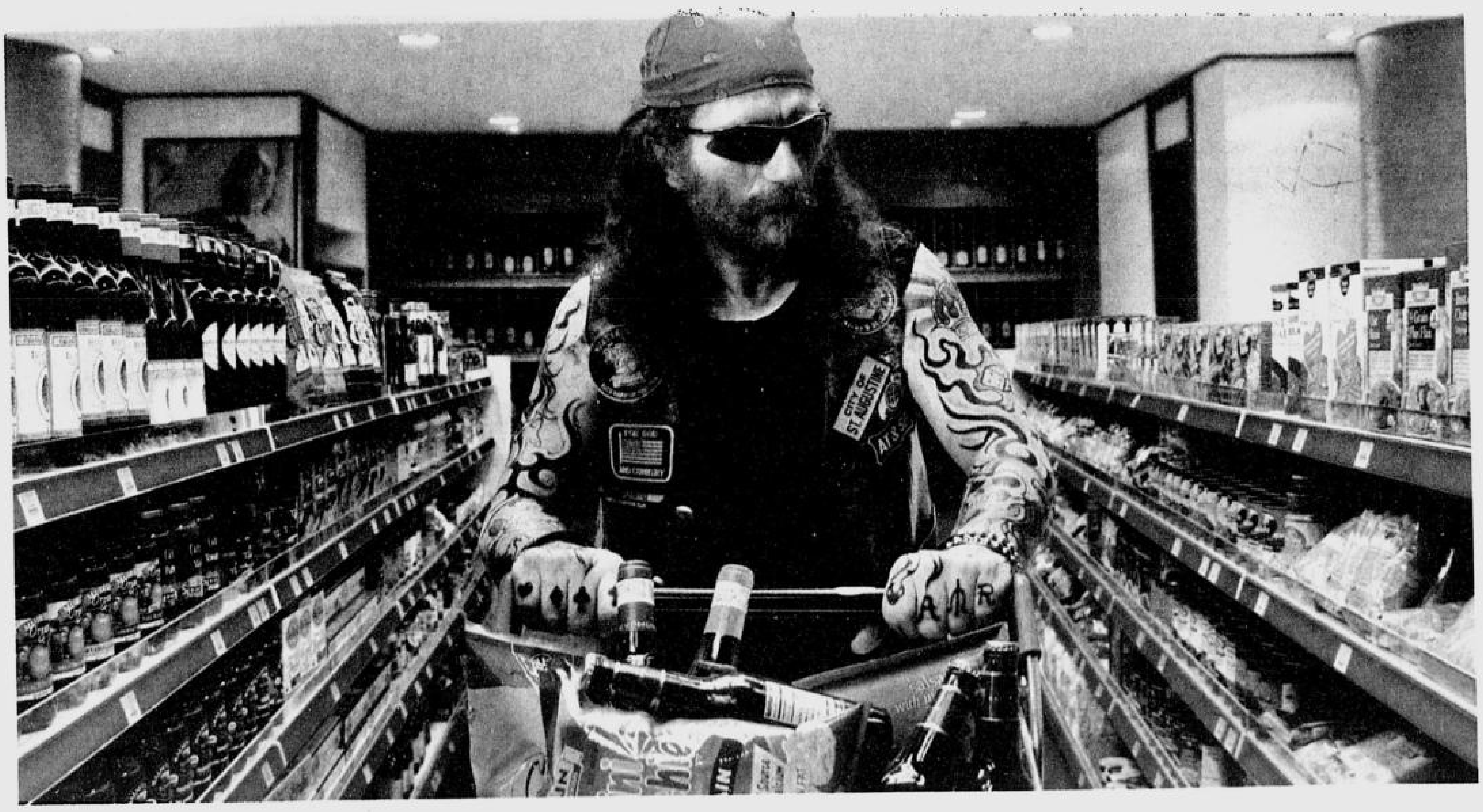

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better choices | better life

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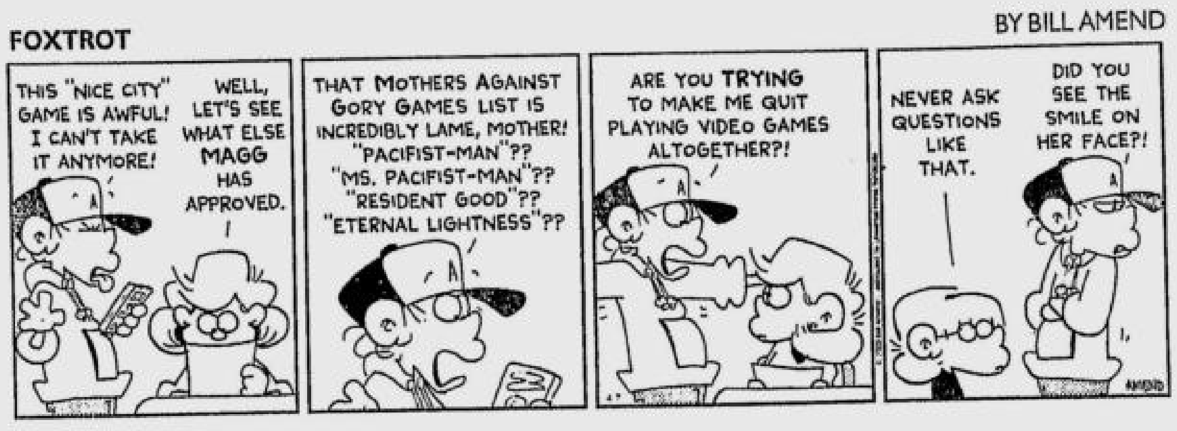
Check the Lifestyle Section every other week for the latest in SM Advantage promos and highlights

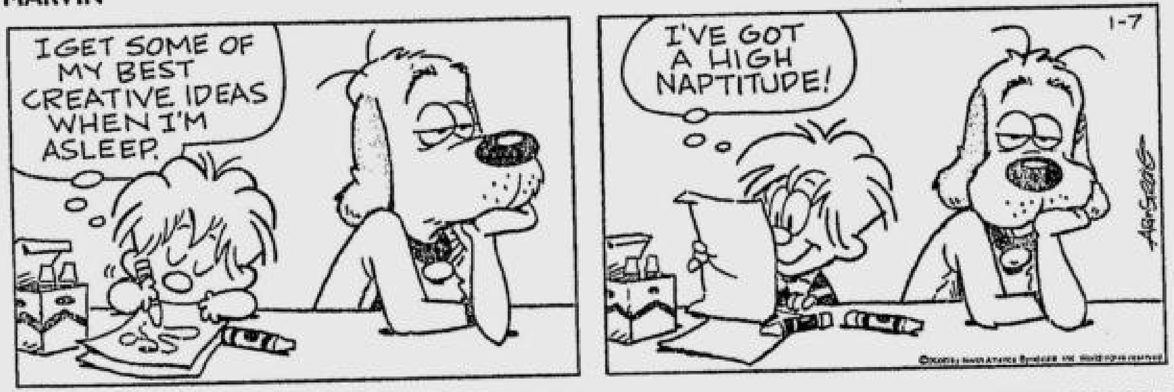
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


THIS "NICE CITY" GAME IS AWFUL! I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE!
WELL, LET'S SEE WHAT ELSE MAGG HAS APPROVED.
THAT MOTHERS AGAINST GORY GAMES LIST IS INCREDIBLY LAME, MOTHER! "PACIFIST-MAN"?? "MS. PACIFIST-MAN"?? "RESIDENT GOOD"?? "ETERNAL LIGHTNESS"??
ARE YOU TRYING TO MAKE ME QUIT PLAYING VIDEO GAMES ALTOGETHER?!
NEVER ASK QUESTIONS LIKE THAT.
DID YOU SEE THE SMILE ON HER FACE?!
AMEND

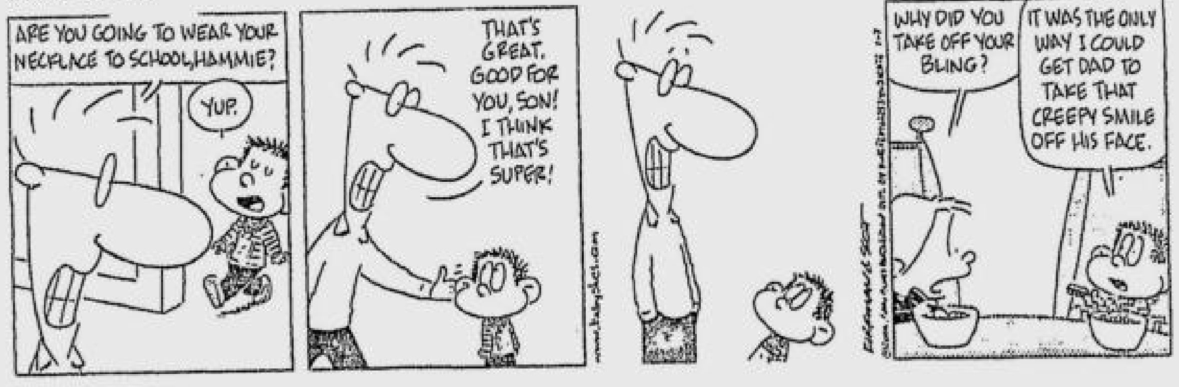
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


I GET SOME OF MY BEST CREATIVE IDEAS WHEN I'M ASLEEP.
1-7
I'VE GOT A HIGH NAPTITUDE!
ARMSTRONG

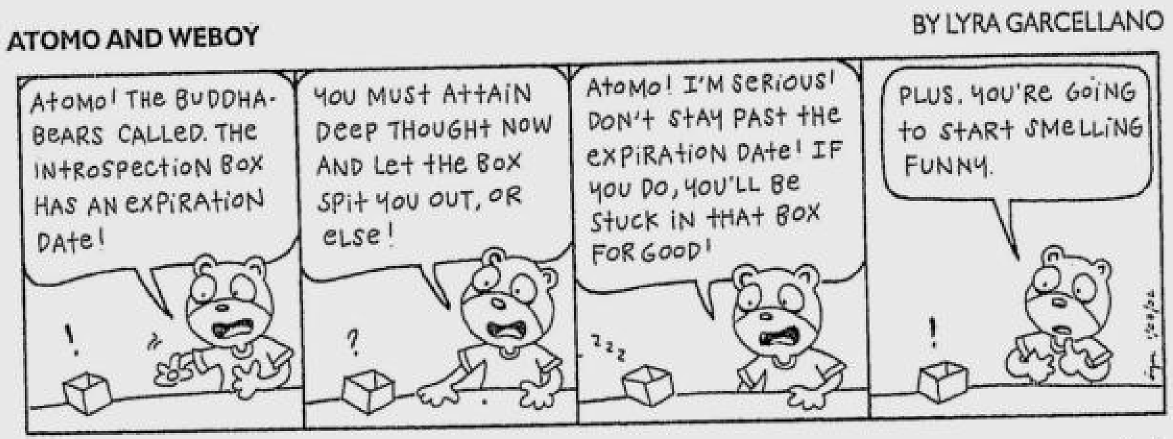
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


ARE YOU GOING TO WEAR YOUR NECKLACE TO SCHOOL, HAMMIE?
YUP.
THAT'S GREAT. GOOD FOR YOU, SON! I THINK THAT'S SUPER!
www.babyblues.com
WHY DID YOU TAKE OFF YOUR BLING?
IT WAS THE ONLY WAY I COULD GET DAD TO TAKE THAT CREEPY SMILE OFF HIS FACE.

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


AtoMo! THe BUDDHA-BeARS CALLeD. THe INtRoSPectioN Box HAS AN exPiRAtioN DAte!
!
You MUSt AttAiN Deep THOUGHt NOW AND Let tHe Box SPit You OUT, OR eLse!
?
AtoMo! I'M SeRiOUS! DON't StAY PASt tHe exPiRAtioN DAte! IF You Do, You'LL Be Stuck IN tHAt Box FOR GooD!
zzz
PLUS. You'Re GoiNG to StARt SMeLLiNG FUNNY.
!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are always intrigued by the unusual. You're broad-minded and curious. These qualities make you intuitive and understanding. People often turn to you for help. Nevertheless, it's important to protect your gentleness. Increased solitude in the year ahead will help you to learn something important and valuable.
Birthdate of: Katie Couric, TV journalist; Nicolas Cage, actor; William Peter Blatty, author.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You're concerned about money and your possessions today. You might want to go shopping. If so, wait until later in the afternoon to get the best bargain for your money.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You feel strong, even empowered, today. You want others to listen to what you have to say. If you have plans relating to publishing and the media, or plans for travel or education, speak up!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Work behind the scenes if you can today. Or work alone. You need quiet time if you can find it. There's something important you have to sort out.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This is a good day to make peace with a friend where there has been dissension or a misunderstanding. (We only get upset with those whom we care about.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Something you do today might call attention to yourself. You won't mind this. Someone is looking to you to set an example. Show others how to take the high road, even in the face of adversity.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You're hungry for adventure. Something different! You want to know more, and learn more. Make travel plans if you can. If not, do something different today.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You can learn more about yourself today by appreciating the values of others. You might not agree with these values, but you know that some prefer rice, some prefer potatoes, some prefer pasta!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Relations with partners have been difficult lately. They have strained your patience. Today you find it easier to see somebody else's point of view.

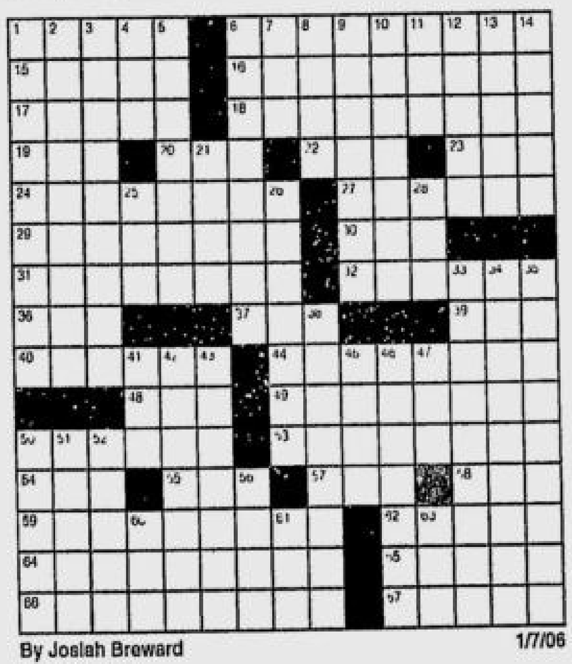
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You want to get better organized today. You might want to clean up some kind of situation. Give yourself the best tools to do the job.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): This is a good day to iron out little difficulties in romantic situations. It's also a good day to work with or teach children. (Be a child again yourself.)

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): This is a good day to putter around home and tidy up things. Later in the day is a good time to shop for home and family members.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Discussions with others are pleasant yet meaningful today. You easily pick up on the vibes of others. You know what people want.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Josiah Breward
Scranton, PA
1/7/06

ACROSS
1 Flat baking pan
6 Space freighters and cruisers
15 Kemo Sabe's pal
16 New York waterway
17 Excessive ire
18 Certain Anabaptist
19 Postal creed conjunction
20 Skater Babilonia
22 Rolodex info
23 Dropout's 2nd chance
24 Coerces
27 Florida's team
29 Southern city founded in 1733
30 Stretch of time
31 Film opening
32 Swindle
36 Michael Jordan's sobriquet
37 Anatomical pouch
39 Estuary
40 Samples
44 Roger Moore TV series
48 Granada cheer
49 Attacking
50 Roast hosts
53 Of potentially rigid tissue
54 Canape spread
55 $ percentages
57 Sort
58 Diarist Anais
59 Drivers of the Old West
62 Solder
64 Licorice liqueurs
65 Diner diner
66 Back in America
67 Scout's good works

DOWN
1 Draws no cards
2 Token payments
3 Etchers
4 Summer at the Sorbonne
5 Italian ice cream
6 Student groups
7 Three in Trieste
8 "__ She Sweet"
9 Backslider
10 Peter of "Bosom Buddies"
11 "Star Wars" pilot Solo
12 Architect Jones
13 Father in old Rome
14 Iditarod rides
21 Prime ranking
25 Pinup's leg
26 Put one's sword away
28 Spigot
33 Bring into being
34 Completed
35 Feedlot fare
38 Dancer Cyd
41 Shoe tip
42 Political winner
43 Sonnet stanzas
45 First name in daredevils
46 Invalid's whereabouts
47 Aardvark's snack
50 Bombeck and others
51 Ascend
52 "As You Like It" role
56 Planet-finding grp.
60 Body shop's $ quote
61 Cincy athlete
63 Arctic explorer John

Friday's Puzzle Solved

S	W	A	M	■	A	S	T	I	■	O	C	T	A	D
L	I	L	A	■	S	O	A	R	■	P	A	R	T	I
E	S	P	Y	■	P	U	R	R	■	E	L	I	A	S
W	H	O	Q	U	E	S	T	I	O	N	M	A	R	K
■	■	■	U	L	N	A	■	T	R	E	L	L	I	S
A	S	S	E	T	S	■	B	A	D	D	Y	■	■	■
S	L	I	E	R	■	T	U	N	E	■	■	A	B	A
H	A	D	N	A	P	O	S	T	R	O	P	H	E	T
E	W	F	■	■	O	W	E	S	■	D	O	S	E	R
■	■	■	D	E	N	N	Y	■	V	E	R	O	N	A
A	B	S	I	N	T	H	■	S	I	L	T	■	■	■
M	R	P	E	R	I	O	D	H	O	L	L	A	N	D
A	O	R	T	A	■	U	C	A	L	■	A	L	O	U
S	W	E	E	P	■	S	I	M	I	■	N	E	V	E
S	N	E	R	T	■	E	V	E	N	■	D	R	A	T

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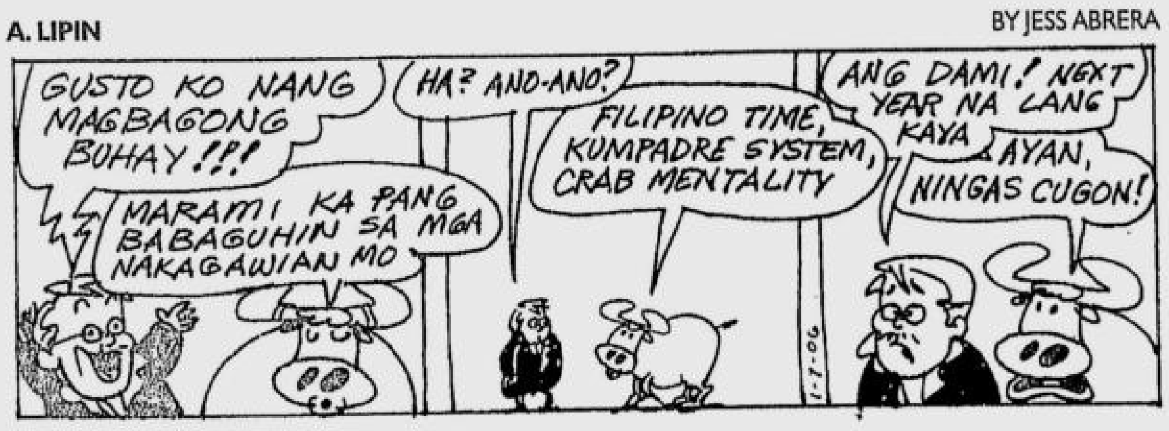
1/7/06

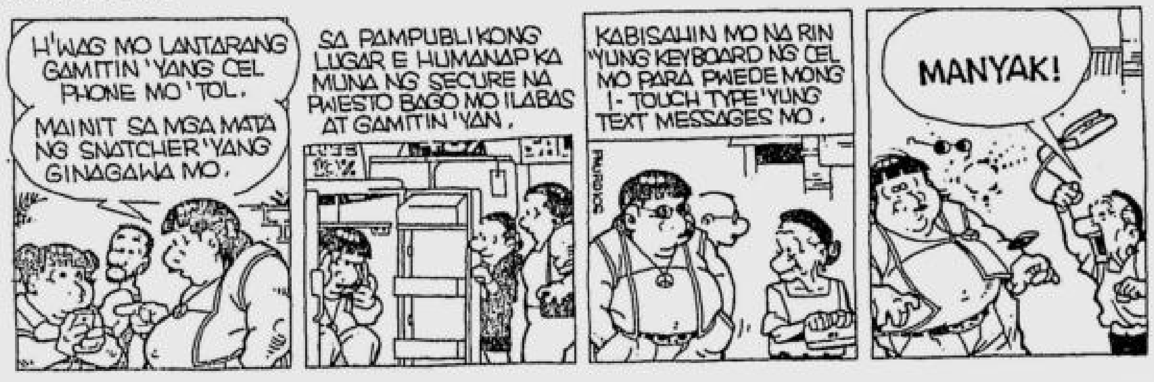
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


GUSTO KO NANG MAGBAGONG BUHAY!!!
MARAMI KA PANG BABAGUHIN SA MGA NAKAGAWIAN MO
HA? ANO-ANO?
FILIPINO TIME, KUMPADRE SYSTEM, CRAB MENTALITY
1-7-06
ANG DAMI! NEXT YEAR NA LANG KAYA
AYAN, NINGAS CUGON!

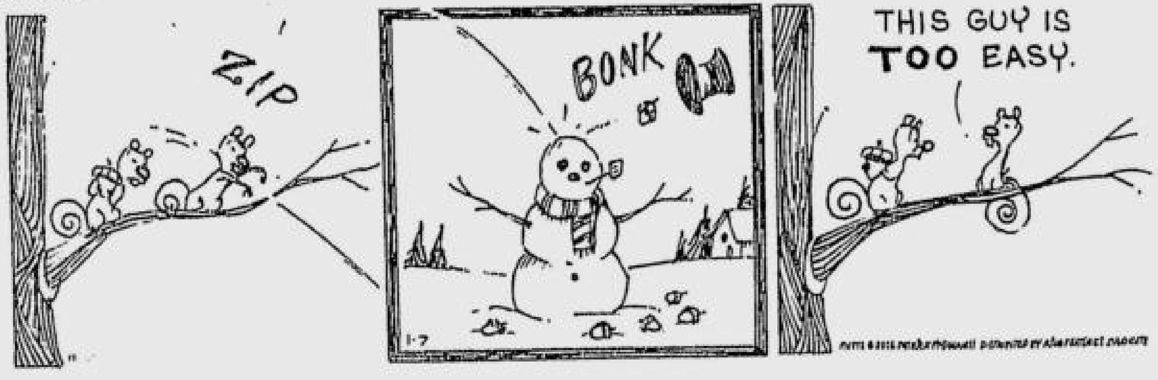
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


H'WAG MO LANTARANG GAMITIN 'YANG CEL PHONE MO 'TOL.
MAINIT SA MGA MATA NG SNATCHER 'YANG GINAGAWA MO.
SA PAMPUBLIKONG LUGAR E HUMANAP KA MUNA NG SECURE NA PWESTO BAGO MO ILABAS AT GAMITIN 'YAN.
KABISAHIN MO NA RIN 'YUNG KEYBOARD NG CEL MO PARA PWEDE MONG I-TOUCH TYPE 'YUNG TEXT MESSAGES MO.
MANYAK!

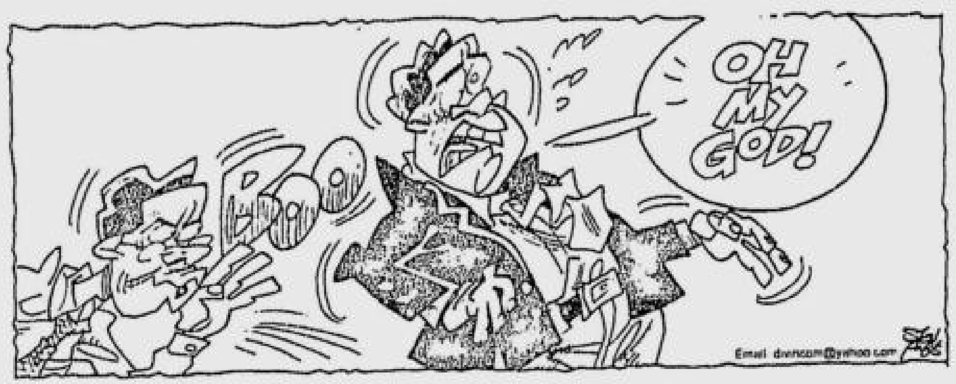
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


ZIP
BONK
1-7
THIS GUY IS TOO EASY.

DIVINE COMEDY

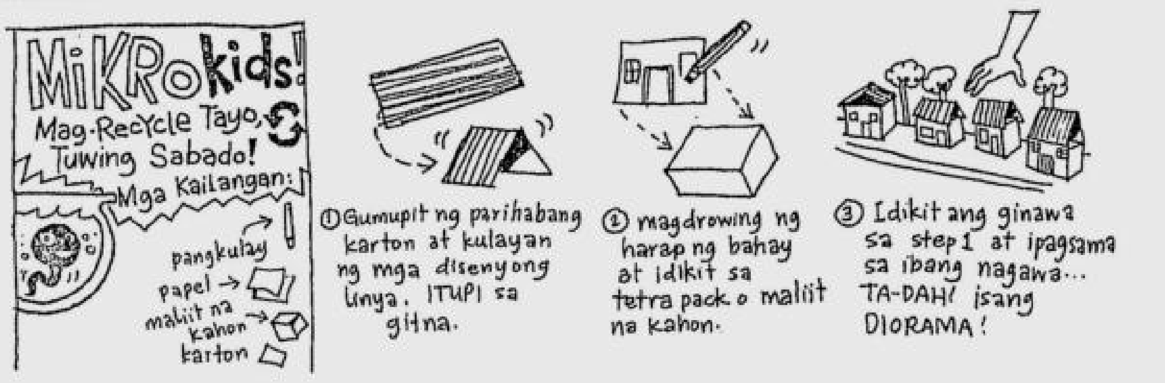
BY STEVEN PABALINAS


BOO
OH MY GOD!
Email divincom@yahoo.com

ATHEIST NA NAGULAT

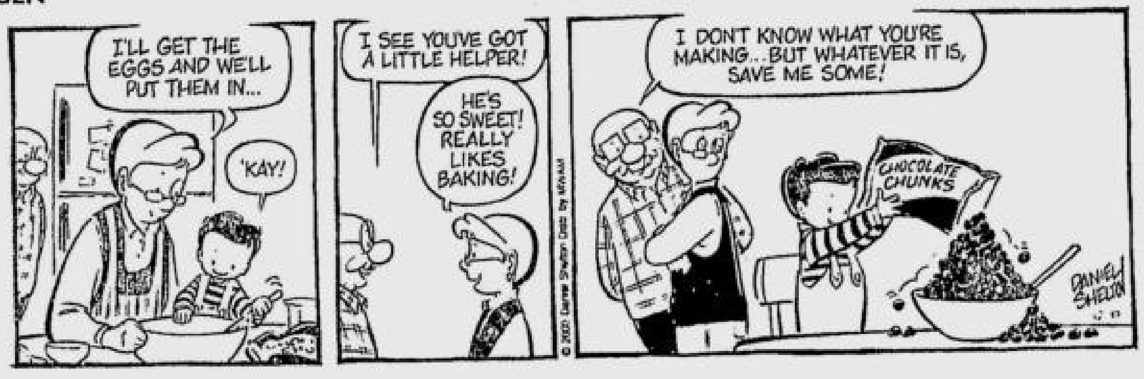
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


MiKRokids!
Mag-Recycle Tayo, Tuwing Sabado!
Mga Kailangan:
pangkulay
papel
maliit na kahon
karton
① Gumupit ng parihabang karton at kulayan ng mga disenyong linya. ITUPI sa gitna.
② magdrowing ng harap ng bahay at idikit sa tetra pack o maliit na kahon.
③ Idikit ang ginawa sa step 1 at ipagsama sa ibang nagawa... TA-DAH! isang DIORAMA!

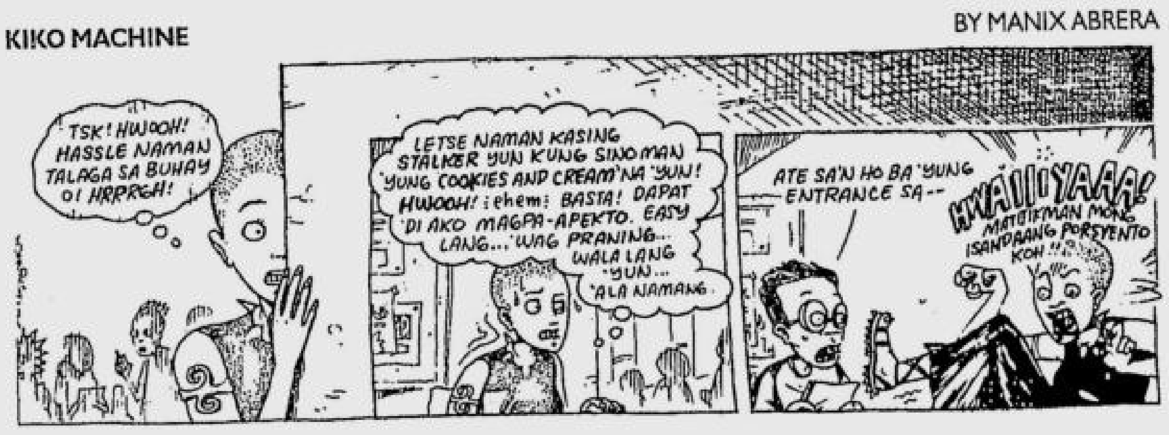
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


I'LL GET THE EGGS AND WE'LL PUT THEM IN...
'KAY!
I SEE YOU'VE GOT A LITTLE HELPER!
HE'S SO SWEET! REALLY LIKES BAKING!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE MAKING... BUT WHATEVER IT IS, SAVE ME SOME!
CHOCOLATE CHUNKS
DANIEL SHELTON

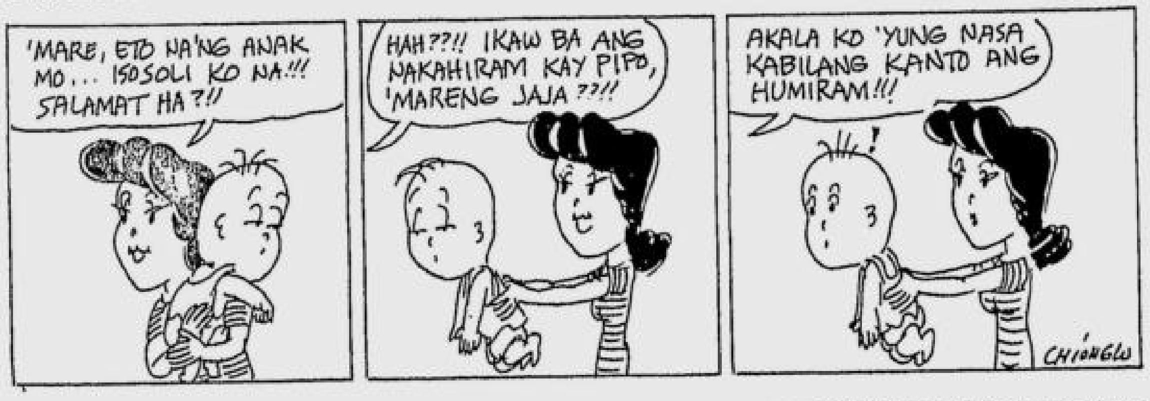
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


TSK! HWOOH! HASSLE NAMAN TALAGA SA BUHAY O! HRRRGH!
LETSE NAMAN KASING STALKER YUN KUNG SINO MAN 'YUNG COOKIES AND CREAM NA 'YUN! HWOOH! :ehem: BASTA! DAPAT 'DI AKO MAGPA-APEKTO. EASY LANG... 'WAG PRANING...
WALA LANG 'YUN... 'ALA NAMANG.
ATE SA'N HO BA 'YUNG ENTRANCE SA--
HWAIIIYAAA! MATOTIKMAN MONG ISANDAANG PORSYENTO KOH!!

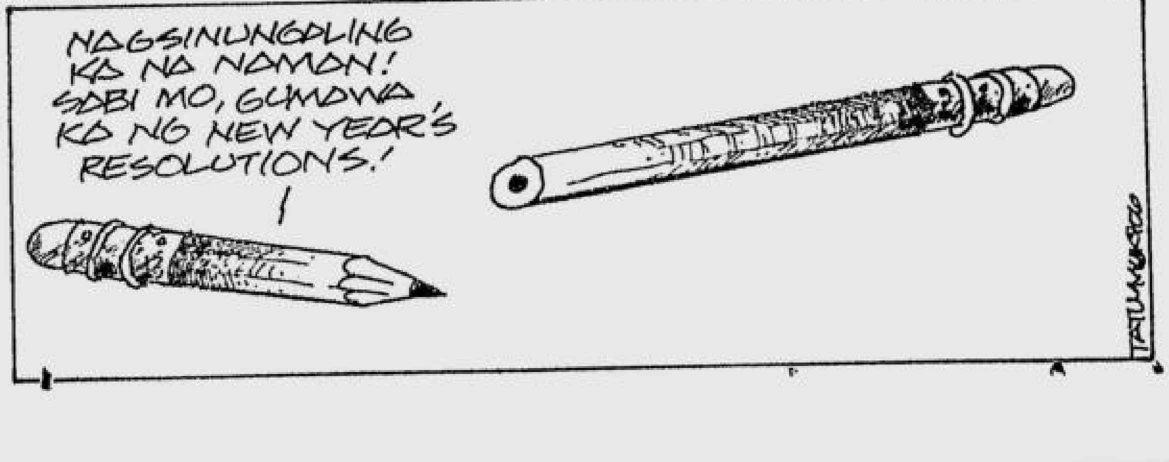
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

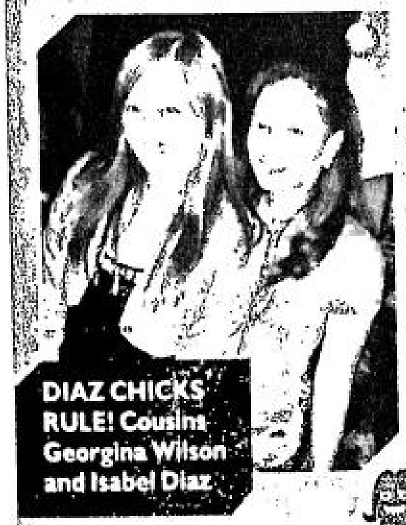

'MARE, ETO NA'NG ANAK MO... ISOSOLI KO NA!!! SALAMAT HA?!!
HAH??!! IKAW BA ANG NAKAHIRAM KAY PIPO, 'MARENG JAJA??!!
AKALA KO 'YUNG NASA KABILANG KANTO ANG HUMIRAM!!!
CHIONGLO

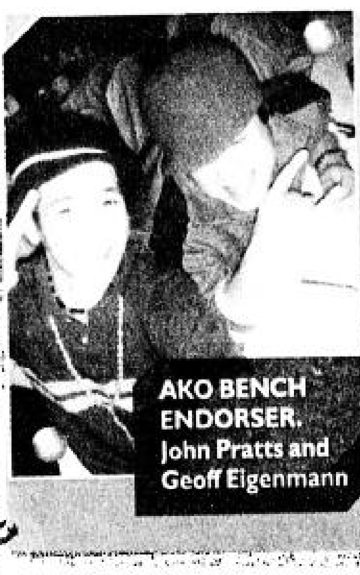
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


NAGSINUNGALING KA NA NAMAN! SABI MO, GUMAWA KA NG NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS!
TATUM

PHILIPPINE INQUIRER Super


DIAZ CHICKS RULE! Cousins Georgina Wilson and Isabel Diaz


AKO BENCH ENDORSER. John Pratts and Geoff Eigenmann

SEXY HUMANS. Rica Peralejo and Lucky Manzano

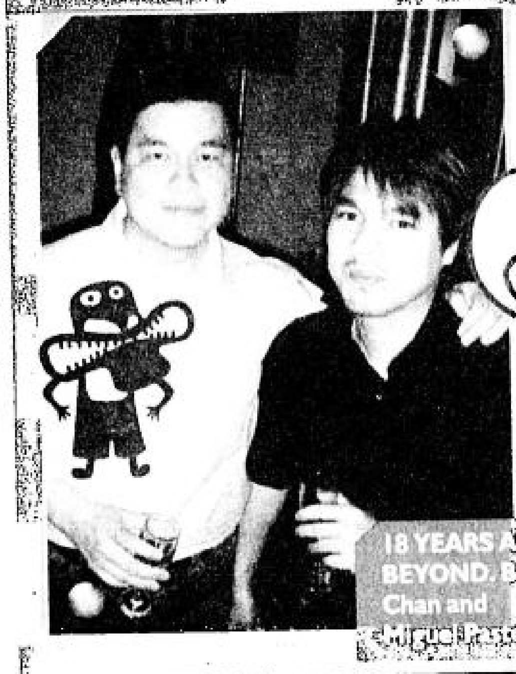
STARSTRUCK SUGO. Bench twins Richard and Raymond Gutierrez

BENCH YOUNG THINGS. Shaina Magdayao and Angelica Panganiban

TWO NIGHTS ONLY. Jomari Yllana and Wendell Ramos

BINGO BOYS. Rafael Rosell and Jake Cuenca

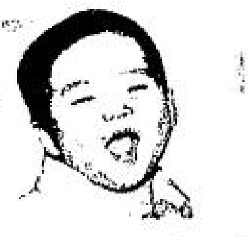
BENCH BROTHERS. Antonio and Jay Aquitania


18 YEARS AND BEYOND. Ben Chan and Miguel Pastor

Bench-marking the next 18 years

PHOTOS BY TIM YAP

Mood denims, transporter belts, alien fans, hi-tech fitting rooms—18 years from now Bench will be as Super! as ever



Tim Yap

WELL DRESSED ROBOT attendants are zipping back and forth finding the right items in the right sizes for me.

I am standing on a platform in the middle of a well-equipped fitting room in a Super! Bench store. There are mirrors rotating around me, offering a view of my Bench outfit in every angle imaginable. Backdrops continuously change to showcase the looks in all possible scenarios. "Whew, 18 years and my size hasn't changed," I tell **Ben Chan** over the micro cell, surgically embedded in my lower lip. "That outfit looks super on you!" Ben's hologram nodded in agreement.

I am wearing a red triangular shrug-o-lero that is all the rage in Uranus right now. My Bench "mood" denims change hypercolors according to my disposition. I feel really comfortable in my **Richard Gomez** vintage collection white cotton briefs (circa 'One Night Only' Bench Underwear show 2004). After all, I am still your basic kinda guy. Or who am I fooling?

Pressing my Bench belt buckle, I then transport myself to the Green Asteroid Belt Launch Pad (home of the first Filipino made rocket JAZA I) where the 36th gala show entitled "Bench to the Future" is being held.

I enter through the big screen, where I am interviewed by **Aryanna Epperson**, sporting her mother **Jenni**'s classic zebra print wrap. As usual, I was late—which is no longer fashionable this year 2023. I make my way through throngs of universal citizens, both humans and aliens eager to catch a glimpse of their favorite celebrities. I take snapshots by blinking at my favorite subjects—the famous sisters **Annika** and **Athena Valdes**, daughters of intergalactic king and queen **Dennis** and **Tessa**.

Whew! I made it in time for the finale, **Julianna Gomez** gliding in a diamond encrusted hovercraft. Curtains of light spell out B-E-N-C-H to finally reveal the godfather sitting on a wooden bench, youthful and serene as ever.

The lights fade, the ovation doesn't. Almost as if to applaud the next 18 years.

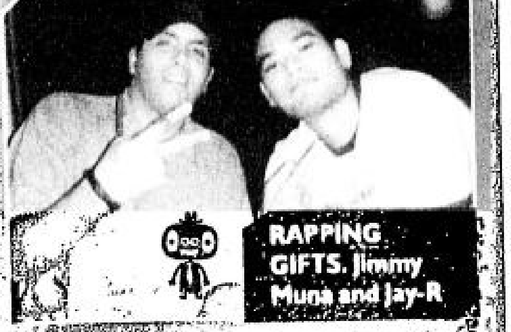
(This article is dedicated to Liza Ilarde-Cuenca)

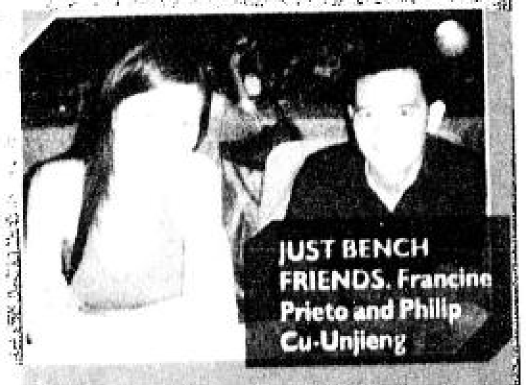
THREE'S COMPANY. Cristine, Bryan and Suyen Lim

BEAUTY TRIO. Alex Carbonell, Steven Doloso and Krist Bansuelo

CAPTAINS OF THE INDUSTRY. Nenita and Virgilio Lim with Dave Rafael

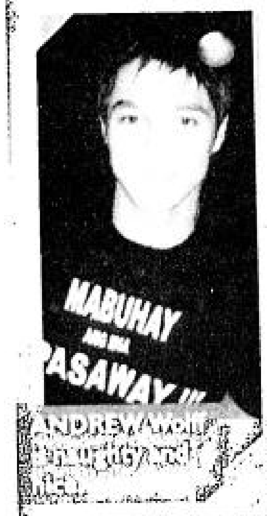
BINGO BONANZA. Iago Raterta, Keren Pascual, Phoem Barranda and Zanjoe Marrudo


RAPPING GIFTS. Jimmy Muna and Jay-R


JUST BENCH FRIENDS. Francine Prieto and Philip Cu-Unjieng

BENCH GENESIS. Richard Gomez [illegible]

BENCH MYX. Iya Villania in [illegible]


ANDREW Wolff [illegible]

BENCH CROONER. Christian Bautista

TALENT MASTER. Douglas Quijano

BENCH FIX'S. French stylist Philippe

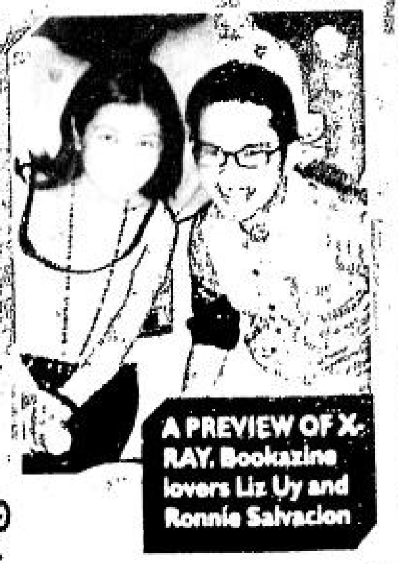
WILSON STREET. Let's go Maggie Wilson

MANAGERIAL ROW. Carlo Orosa and Arnold [illegible]

RATED X. [illegible]

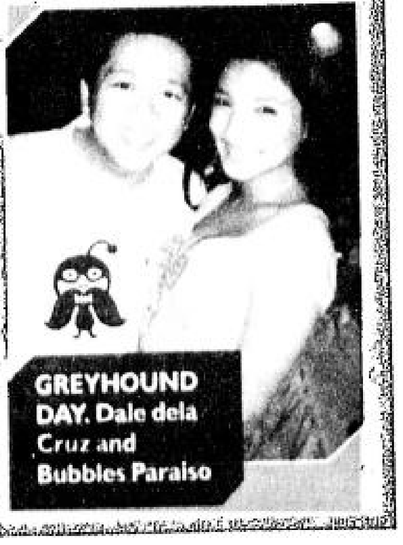
STYLIST AND MUSE. Noel Manapat and Chechel Joson

CREATIVE FORCES. Mark Nicdao and Juan Sarte III


A PREVIEW OF X-RAY. Bookazine lovers Liz Uy and Ronnie Salvacion

M AND M. M Cafe's Andrei Wisniewski and Myrza Sison

COCKTAIL CIRCUIT. Celine Lopez and JR Isaac


GREYHOUND DAY. Dale dela Cruz and Bubbles Paraiso

Emigrate Expectations

Man about town

Chuck Dy

NOBODY has been made a poorer person by the experience of travel.

Dear Man About Town,

I recently graduated from college here in the Philippines and I am looking at furthering my studies towards a future in Medicine. One of my options is to study abroad in the United States or Australia. My parents and friends think it is a good idea but my professor in college was not encouraging of this alternative. He pointed out that I may decide to stay in the foreign country after my studies, and that the state of the Philippines was partly caused by the "brain drain," or our best and brightest minds emigrating. In truth, I am tempted to live abroad after my studies, mostly out of curiosity. But I see my professor's point and the last thing I want to do is contribute to what is already a very bleak situation in the Philippines.

WHEN I FIRST ENCOUNTERED THE expression "brain drain," I automatically inferred that this was in reference to the not uncommon phenomenon of young males devolving into blithering idiots when watching reruns of Baywatch. Later, I learned that, as you said, it was in fact the term used to describe the massive migration of talent and potential, from their homelands (usually poorer countries) to foreign shores (usually richer countries). The Philippines itself has been listed as a nation which exports its best and brightest, mostly in the field of medicine, but also increasingly in the realms of technology, science, business and fashion. For some reason, lawyers, politicians and actors choose to stay, and this isn't really helping either.

The Philippines is faced with the growing dilemma of having promising citizens who could, theoretically, contribute to the positive development of the country, ply their trade and talent in the service of other nations. On the one hand, it would appear unpatriotic of these emigrants to be deserting the motherland when they are needed most. On the other, it would seem illogical to deny a person their right to a better life if they think that is what is to be gained by leaving the country. It's like the Parable of the Talents on a global scale: What would Jesus do if he had a Green Card?

The brain drain part

Many prominent writers and public officials have voiced their distress, and sometimes disgust, at this wave of emigrants who have decided to depart. It is argued that there is just as much opportunity and employment in the Philippines as anywhere else. True, the dollar and the pound still exercise amazing financial clout in the international economy, but the peso can demonstrate comparable flexibility given the lower cost of living in the Philippines.

Also—and this is really where the "brain drain" part comes in—if we keep on allowing our most fertile seeds to flower elsewhere, how do we intend to get the grass greener on our side? I mean, if every potential Filipino surgeon decided to sharpen his or her scalpel in Los Angeles, who would operate at our tables? If these young talents just stayed here, we could have gotten on with Erap's impeachment trial without being interrupted every month by his need to see a doctor overseas!

Finally, the patriotism card is played, and truly, this is a difficult argument to trump. Yes, the state of the nation smells like a cat shit and durian omelette, but do we not feel the need to stay and help as much as we can? Yes, inflation and corruption has hammered the engine of our economy to the speed of a Kia in a world of Benzes and Beemers, but is it not our duty as citizens to rectify the situation from within? Children, would you desert your ailing mother just because she's an alcoholic, subscribes to The Buzz as gospel truth, and dates a string of men (or women) who take advantage of her in the name of God and Democracy?

Stop. I'm making myself cry.

I left the Philippines nine years ago and it was not because I disagreed with any of those fine, emphatic and valid arguments. In truth, it would have been far easier for me to have stayed within the thousands of islands I still call home. By now, I would probably have settled into a comfortable lifestyle, with a handsome salary, a nice home in Makati, a doting wife and children who have memorized all the Mysteries of the Rosary. Instead, I live in a very frightening area of New York City with four gay men who apparently enjoy fighting at four in the morning. Instead, I live from paycheck to paycheck hoping I don't get sick because my medical insurance won't renew until next January. Instead I spend my Christmases in the company of other orphans, missing my family and friends back home.

But I love this phase in my life for one simple reason: I believe this is making me a better human being. And that's really the unassailable conviction that I base my nomadic adbventures on.

The grass is greener on the other side

If people leave their homelands (and believe me, this is NOT an easy choice to make), it is not because they lack patriotism or because they will financially better off abroad, it SHOULD be because they are pursuing a path they believe will make them improved versions of themselves. Is this for everybody? Of course not. Some will discover that emigrating is not a solution to anything, and that the course to self-development is right in their backyards. Many of my friends who have had the opportunity and papers to go abroad have chosen to weave the fabric of their lives at the local loom of the Philippines, and they have produced magnificent tapestries.

But nobody, I repeat, nobody has been made a poorer person by the experience of travel. Whether or not you decide to stay on is a different story altogether, but if you suffer the itch of the curious, scratching it will leave only beautiful scars worth showing off.

Is it better to live abroad than in the Philippines? Depends on what you're trying to achieve. As I stated earlier, many people have consciously decided to stay and successfully managed to find the correct formula for happiness. Others who have made the leap abroad likewise discover that it is not for them. They miss the familiarity and ways of the Filipino; they miss the food, the music and the kinship. And no matter how hard First World nations may try to manifest themselves as the bastions of civilization, there is still a lot of weird bureaucratic hoopla that's even more disturbing than anything we've got in Manila. Folks tend to forget that if the grass is greener on the other side, it is usually because there is more shit in the soil.

Is it unpatriotic to emigrate? I believe that it is the complete opposite. If you enhance your humanity, wherever you are in the world, it reflects positively on the Filipino people. This is why we take such pride in our performers and athletes who garner international recognition (regardless if they have even stepped foot in the Motherland) and claim them as our own. Trust me, if Kris Aquino ever wins an Oscar, I'm going to be her proudest critic. Hell, if she goes to the Oscars I'm buying dinner for all the Pinoys in Harlem! All two of us!

The point is, a person's first priority is to himself. To ensure that he is doing everything possible to be the best he can be. Whether this means going abroad or not is a matter of purely personal assessment. Before we can hope to fix a country we had better work on the individual tools, one citizen at a time. As for the "brain drain," I don't think it would be such a problem exporting our best minds to different nations if only we found a way to exile our worst minds to different planets. And if carnivorous aliens do exist, let's hope they're hungry and that they've got strong stomachs.

E-mail author at bohemiansamurai@yahoo.com

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4-PAGE
SUNDAY
COMICS!

■ **NEWS / A2**

DOJ urged to emulate Japan's swift action on GI murder suspect

■ **MAGAZINE**

Son also rises, so dad can sing–and stay forever Yang

■ **ENTERTAINMENT /A3-4**

Secret life of Laurence Olivier includes proof of homosexual affair

Nene Pimentel's story: Martial law, the musical

By Gerry Lirio

MARTIAL LAW, THE MUSICAL?

It's about time. The story of martial law—or part of it—will be told in 23 songs.

The musical is based on a 600-page book tentatively titled "Martial Law in the Philippines: My Story," written by Sen. Aquilino

NENE/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER Sunday
BALANCED NEWS, FEARL VIEWS

Respect lowly 25¢ coin as symbol of daily heroism

By Art Villasanta
Contributor

USELESS CHANGE. That's what many Filipinos think of their 25-centavo coins. If you dropped a 25-centavo

RESPECT/ A6

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'Strong peso no big deal'

Roxas hits 'headline stats' as meaningless if people don't benefit

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

WHAT DO A STRONG PESO and surging stocks and bonds mean for the lives of the majority of Filipinos?

Meaningless.

Sen. Manuel Roxas, nominally an administration senator, has been scathing in his criticism of Malacañang's unrelenting optimism over these positive economic indicators.

To Roxas, a former trade secretary, they would be all but meaningless unless the government translated them to lower prices of goods and services, more capital raised and more affordable loans for businesses and consumers.

"Her [Ms Arroyo's] economic managers must guard against the folly of applying the US model to our economy. In the US, when these factors [currency, stocks and bonds] are up, they are immediately felt in the real economy because there are no bottlenecks. It's not like here where it takes a lot more work, assertiveness and engagement by government to convert these factors into real output," he said.

"It's like we are looking at the sky and see a good alignment of stars foretelling a bountiful harvest even though the croplands have yet to be farmed," he said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has unveiled a P35-billion program to pump-prime the economy in the first three months of the new year through, among other measures, subsidized instant noodles and rice, and address what Roxas calls the "disconnect" between the financial economy and the real economy.

But Roxas warned that giving poor Filipinos subsidized noodles and rice would only satisfy their hunger for a day but would not solve their long-term needs of a steady income and affordable food and services.

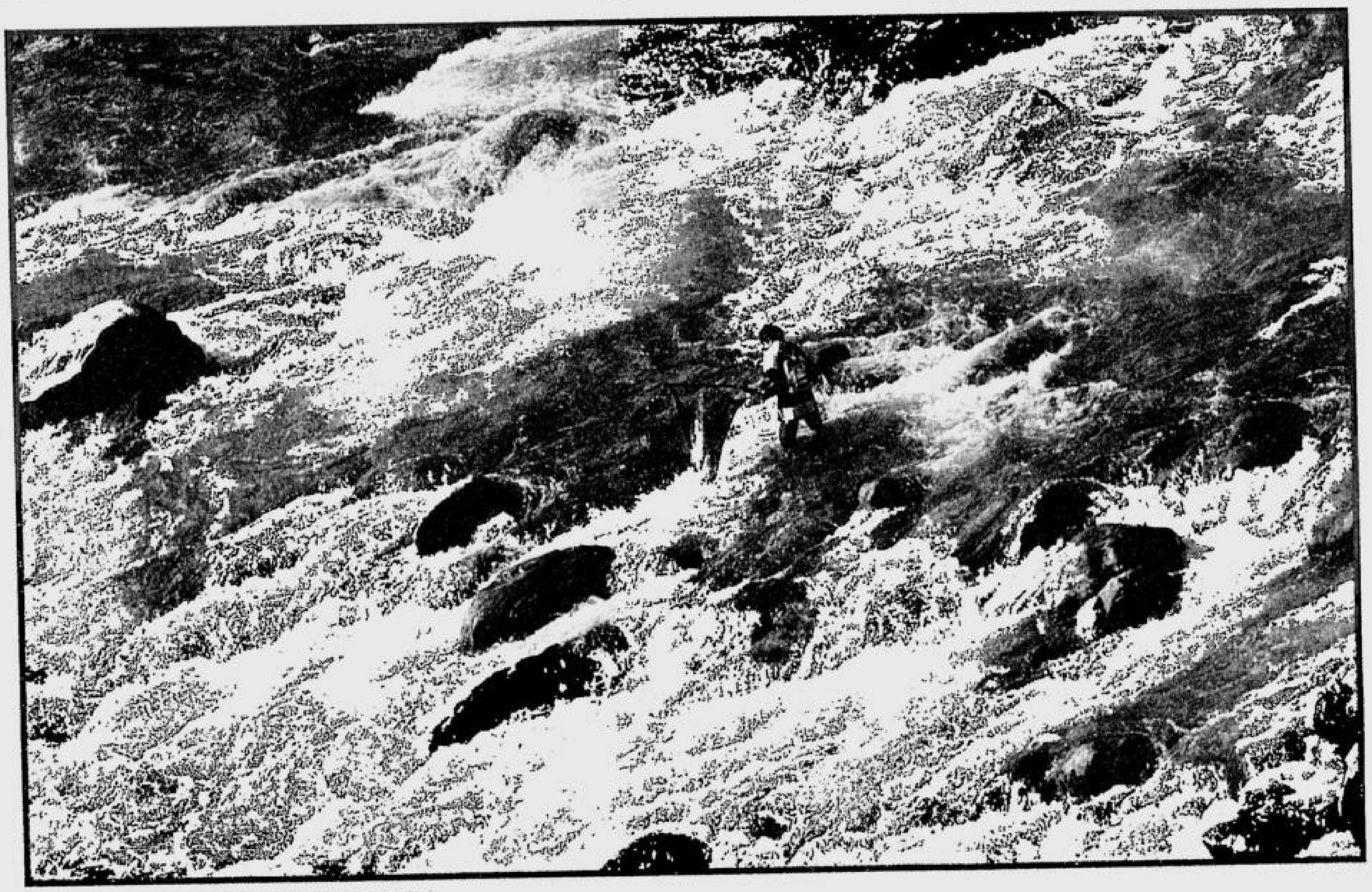
He said the "headline statistics" being dished out by Malacañang could even "mask more than they reveal" about the economy.

"The anecdotal feedback from the business community, from small traders to large corporations, show that it has been a joyless Christmas, a joyless economy," said Roxas.

He noted that the rise in oil prices alone of between $5 and $10 per barrel last year has taken away P30 billion to P60 billion from the purchasing power of Filipinos.

"The headline statistics being trumpeted by the government are good and yet everybody is feeling lousy and their sales reflect this lousiness," said Roxas.

STRONG/ A6



ALL BY HIS LONESOME IN THE RAPIDS
In the turbulence of the rapids of the pristine Bayyo river in Bontoc, Mountain Province, a man goes fishing using the traditional method (pocket net or "sigpao" in the vernacular). The river is now being developed by the local government as a white water rafting destination for tourists.
EDWIN BACASMAS

DOING GOOD IN BAD TIMES

Pawnshops assets now ₱14B double from '95

By Daxim L. Lucas

(First of 3 parts)

SPECIAL REPORT

WHEN MIDDLE- OR LOW-INCOME Filipinos fall on hard times, many often run to pawnshops to convert their meager possessions into instant cash.

This was the case with Mila Batan from Iloilo, who works as a household helper in Quezon City.

She hocked her "instamatic" camera for P500, redeeming it a few weeks later. Last year, she pawned it again.

"I needed the money," she said, echoing the wail of many who go the same route during desperate times.

Mila has yet to redeem her camera, and will likely forfeit it—the same story of others unable to repay their loans with pawnshops or, worse, loan sharks. A story repeated a thousandfold across the country.

The trend of Filipinos running to pawnshops during difficult times is backed by official statistics.

According to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), which supervises the pawnshop industry, there are 11,942 pawnshops operating in the country as of November 2005. That is more than twice the number in 1995 during an economic boom, when there were only 4,173 pawnshops in operation.

"Pawnshops really thrive during hard times," said central bank deputy director Nila Nazareno. "You can see it from the numbers."

Indeed, the pawnshop industry has grown faster than the commercial banking business. Pawnshops' total assets stood at P14.6 billion at the end of 2004, from only P7.7 billion in 1995, while their consolidated capital base has increased at a slower rate, from P4.2 bil-

PAWNSHOPS / A4

How to start a pawnshop

1. CALL BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS (BSP) pawnshop hotline, (02)524-8713, to check if the pawnshop name you want is already taken.

2. Register your business either at the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), for single proprietorship, or the Securities and Exchange Commission, for partnerships or corporations.

The DTI is at the Trade & Industry Building, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati. In the provinces, DTI offices are in or near

HOW TO/ A4

RODEL ROTONI

AND THE WINNERS ARE. "Ako legal winner," declares ZsaZsa Padilla, Best Actress in the Metro Manila Film Fest; Marvin Agustin wins Best Actor vs perennial favorites Eddie Garcia and Christopher de Leon. *(Story on Page A2)*

Mike Defensor names 3 choices to replace him as DENR secretary

By Norman Bordadora

ENVIRONMENT SECRETARY MICHAEL Defensor yesterday said he expected many aspirants to lobby for the environment portfolio, in effect acknowledging that he would soon be formally taking up the post of President Macapagal-Arroyo's chief of staff.

Defensor named three of his undersecretaries at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources—Ramon Paje, Demetrio Ignacio and Armando de Castro—among his choices for officer in charge when he goes on leave from the DENR to continue managing the President's schedule and programs.

But he said he had yet to discuss the matter with the President.

Defensor is said to be part of the latest Cabinet revamp that is expected to be announced shortly.

On Friday, he said he would take a leave beginning this week to assist Ms Arroyo in her official affairs. He said he had actually been handling her schedule full time despite his duties at the DENR.

Paje, "the most senior of the undersecretaries," is in charge of forestry and environment, and Ignacio, of policy and planning, Defensor said. Both men are career executive service officers.

De Castro, a longtime associate of Defensor's, is in charge of management and technical services.

"Now that [the revamp] has been announced, there'd be many who'd start lobbying for the position [of environment secretary]." Defensor said on the phone.

"But who knows, there might be [no new appointment to the top DENR post]," he said, reiterating what he said on Friday—that "nothing" was final, and that things were "still hanging."

Defensor was quoted in some news reports as saying that Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes, Malacañang media executive Cerge Remonde, Office of External Affairs head Ed Pamintuan and Transportation Undersecretary Jose Cortez were being considered as possible environment secretaries.

"There's no [formal] short list yet. I only said that these were the people being considered for the position before I was appointed [to the top DENR post]," he said.

Defensor said he had been quite busy the past days handling the President's affairs.

He said he managed to take a break from his duties yesterday, when it turned out that there was no room on Ms Arroyo's helicopter.

"Otherwise, I'd again be with the President [on one of her trips to the provinces]," Defensor said.

As though in step with the impending Cabinet revamp, Defense Undersecretary Francisco del Rosario Jr. has resigned for health reasons.

In a statement sent to media offices

MIKE/ A6

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern and Southern Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. Northern and Eastern Luzon will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. Rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with light rains.

COMPILED BY: JAMIE ALARCON, PDI RESEARCH/01/08/06 SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Antis dub council GMA 'cry for help'

By Norman Bordadora and Philip C. Tubeza

OPPOSITION LEGISLATORS YESTERDAY DISmissed President Macapagal-Arroyo's decision to convene the Council of State as a "cry for help" or a ploy to vest her administration with a "semblance of legitimacy" and blunt efforts to remove her from office as the anniversary of Edsa II approaches.

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, ex-officio member of the council as Senate minority leader, said he would not attend the meeting scheduled for Jan. 26 because he did not want to "fall for an administration ploy to co-opt the opposition and enable Ms Arroyo to buy more time to prevent her ouster."

He said that the country "will remain politically and economically unstable as long as President Arroyo is in office because of unresolved doubts over her election to a second term and because of her misuse of the powers of her office."

House Deputy Minority Leader Satur C. Ocampo said the President's decision to invite former Presidents Corazon Aquino and Joseph Estrada to the meeting would not outflank the broad alliance calling for her removal from power.

"The state council meeting at this time will only heighten Ms Arroyo's political isolation from the people and even from her three predecessors in the presidency: It is a fact that Mrs. Aquino and Mr. Estrada have publicly rejected her leadership," Ocampo said in a statement.

He noted that former President Fidel Ramos had also criticized the "no elections" proposal even as "he issued dissimulated calls for her resignation by way of a plea that she cut her term of office."

"Ms Arroyo and her cohorts are obviously terrified at the prospect of these three former presidents formally and actively joining the broad anti-Arroyo united front," Ocampo added. "They are falling all over themselves in criticizing, heaping intrigues and discouraging the three leaders."

Opposition Sen. Jinggoy Estrada said his father had not received an invitation but was unlikely to attend as this would be tantamount to recognizing Ms Arroyo's presidency.

"Majority of the people maintain that President Estrada never resigned from office and that he remains the duly elected President," Jinggoy said in a statement. "Perhaps, only the people close to GMA were invited. It would not be unusual if these leaders would just end up conspiring during the meeting."

Malacañang had indicated earlier that Estrada would not be invited due to legal constraints arising from his detention pending trial on plunder charges.

Ocampo said that with the Edsa II anniversary approaching, he expected the "political temblors" to get worse in light of the President's adamant refusal to relinquish "the presidency she stole in 2004."

"The anniversary of the uprising would only remind the people of Arroyo's innumerable acts of treachery against the causes of Edsa 2: Good government and justice," he said.

Ocampo urged Aquino, Ramos and Estrada to unite, join the opposition-proposed transition council, and mobilize their supporters "towards regime change."

"These three former Presidents must not entertain illusions of reassuming the mantle of leadership lest they be accused of being no different from the unrepentant opportunist that is Arroyo. But they can certainly help in setting up a post-Arroyo regime insofar as providing counsel and advice to the broad anti-Arroyo united front in the formation of a transition council," Ocampo said.

Pimentel said the prevailing sentiment against Ms Arroyo was apparent in the latest surveys.

Solon bucks VFA anew, cites Japan action vs GI

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LUCENA CITY – HOUSE DEPUTY Minority Leader Satur Ocampo renewed his call for the abrogation of the Visiting Forces Agreement yesterday and asked Filipino officials to emulate Japan's swift and decisive action in prosecuting an erring American soldier and having him arrested.

"One rape is enough. But the 5,000 US soldiers who are set to come to Mindanao for another round of supposed military exercises can engender more abuses and violations of Philippine laws," said Ocampo in a statement e-mailed to the INQUIRER here.

He was referring to a joint RP-US antiterrorism exercise scheduled in Mindanao later this month.

Taking his cue from the quick Japanese action against an unidentified US serviceman who admitted beating a Japanese woman to death on Jan. 3 in Yokosuka City, the Bayan Muna party-list congressman expressed frustration over the seeming reluctance of the Department of Justice and the VFA Commission in taking custody of the four US Marines accused of raping a Filipino woman at the Subic Bay Freeport last Nov. 1

"Had Japanese officials acted like Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez and VFA Commission chief Zosimo Paredes, the Japanese people would have demanded their heads or expected them to perform hara-kiri," Ocampo said.

The US military in Japan agreed Saturday to hand over the serviceman to Japanese police shortly after the Yokohama District Court issued an arrest warrant on robbery-murder charges against the 21-year-old sailor based on the carrier Kitty Hawk.

"Transfer of custody is absolutely the right thing to do in this case," Rear Admiral James Kelly, the commander of US naval forces in Japan, said in a statement. "The US Navy's responsibility to see this matter through to its rightful conclusion does not end here, and we will continue to provide our complete support and cooperation with Japanese authorities." *With an AP report*

Cha-cha backers aim for 5-M signatures

By Norman Bordadora

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS favoring the constitutional amendments proposed by the Consultative Commission, including the controversial "no elections" transitory provision, will start a "people's initiative" campaign in support of the proposed changes.

Eastern Samar Gov. Ben Evardone, spokesperson of the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (ULAP), said the local government officials plan to obtain the signatures of 12 percent of the country's voting population, or of three percent of the voters of every legislative district, for a petition that would propose the Charter changes (Cha-cha).

With the country's estimated voting population of more than 40 million, the signatures needed for a successful people's initiative would be a little less than five million, Evardone said.

"It will be easy. Majority of the local government officials would be pushing for this people's initiative," Evardone said at the weekly Kapihan sa Sulo forum yesterday.

The governor said the people's initiative campaign would be formalized at a meeting this week of ULAP members composed of governors, vice governors, mayors, vice mayors and barangay officials.

Evardone said the proposal to cancel the 2007 election and extend the terms of incumbent officials until 2010, when a parliamentary system will be put in place, was just one of the reasons local officials were supporting the ConCom amendments.

"There are many other reasons. (No election) is just a bonus," he said.

A people's initiative, through a petition directly proposed by the people, is one of the constitutionally approved methods to change the 1987 Constitution. The petition has to be proposed by at least 12 percent of the total number of registered voters, of which every legislative district must be represented by at least three percent of its registered voters.

Any amendment proposed by this method has to be ratified in a plebiscite to be held after the Commission on Elections has certified the sufficiency of the petition.

Evardone said the people's initiative campaign is meant to complement the move by a sector of Congress to have the legislature convene as a constituent assembly to make changes to the Constitution, against an elected constitutional convention favored by the Senate.

The people's initiative is seen as an alternative plan of Charter change proponents in case the Senate proves to be obstructive.

ULAP is said to support the ConCom's main Charter change (Cha-cha) proposals which include a shift to a parliamentary system with a unicameral legislature.

Evardone said ULAP also supported the ConCom proposal to open up vital industries to foreign ownership. *With Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Zsa Zsa, Marvin Agustin, 'Kutob' filmfest winners

By Marinel R. Cruz

ZSA ZSA PADILLA, WHO PORtrayed an anguished spouse in "Ako Legal Wife: Mano Po 4," won the Best Actress Award in the Metro Manila Film Festival in an awards show held Friday at the Aliw Theater in Pasay City.

Marvin Agustin was heralded as Best Actor for his performance in Joey Reyes' thriller "Kutob," while Reyes bagged the Best Director award.

Padilla played Chona Chong who is out to outwit her rich Chinese husband's (Jay Manalo) two mistresses portrayed by Cherri Pie Picache and Rufa Mae Quinto.

"While doing this film, I realized it's more challenging to make viewers laugh than cry," said Padilla in her acceptance speech. "Secret dream *ko po ang maging komedyante* (to be a comedienne)."

Agustin was cited for his gripping portrayal of the psychopath Limuel in "Kutob." The thriller, produced by Canary Films, also won Third Best Picture and a cash prize of P300,000.

Winning Best Festival Picture honors and P750,000 was Regal Entertainment's period drama, "Blue Moon." The fantasy film, "Exodus: Tales from the Enchanted Kingdom," from Imus Productions brought home the Second Best Picture trophy and a prize of P500,000.

"Kutob" also won the Gatpuno Antonio Villegas Cultural Award while Joel Lamangan's "Blue Moon" was honored as the Most Gender-Sensitive Film.

Picache beat more than 20 other nominees to the Best Supporting Actress award for "Ako Legal Wife," while comedian Jose Manalo surprised everyone when he won Best Supporting Actor for the movie "Enteng Kabisote 2, Okay Ka Fairy Ko… The Legend Continues."

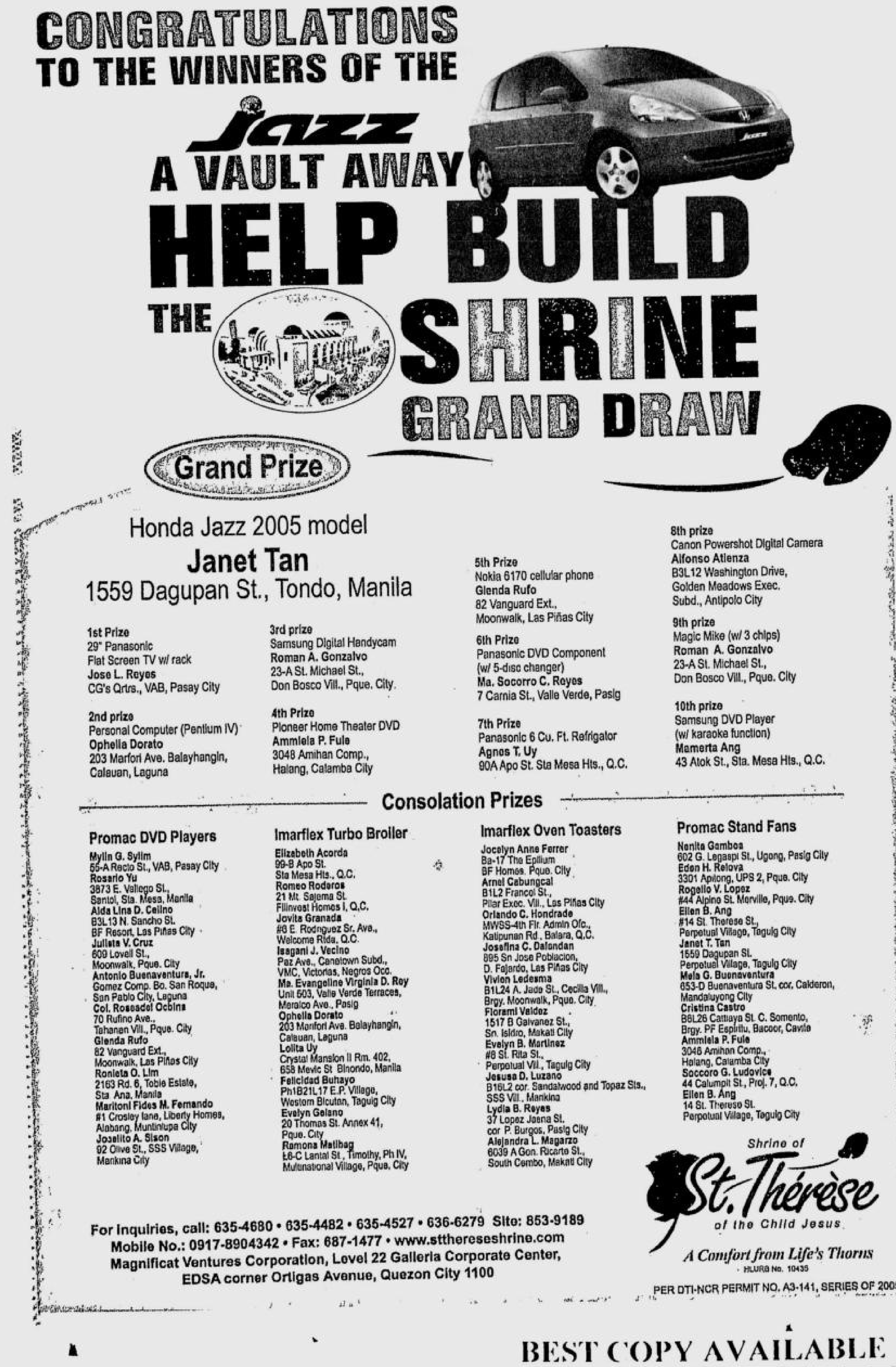
The Best Story and Best Screenplay trophies were handed to Allan Tijano for "Blue Moon," while Vito Cajili won as Best Editor for his work on "Kutob."

Erik Matti's "Exodus" brought home all the technical awards. The movie won for Richard Somes the Best Production Design honor, while the Best Visual Effects award was handed to Ignite Media.

Baby Lucero was named Best Make-Up Artist, Lyle Sacris was Best Cinematographer, and Ditoy Aguila Best Sound Engineer, all for "Exodus."

Other winners were: Paul Salas, "Shake, Rattle & Roll 2K5," Best Child Performer; Jaime Fabregas, "Kutob," Best Musical Scorer; Richard Gutierrez, Male Star of the Night; Iya Villania, Female Star of the Night, and "Kasalanan Nga Ba?" performed by Thor for "Kutob," Best Original Theme Song.

Guest of honor President Macapagal-Arroyo handed out P1 million each in incentives to the 10 production companies that participated in this year's festival.



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5th Prize
Nokia 6170 cellular phone
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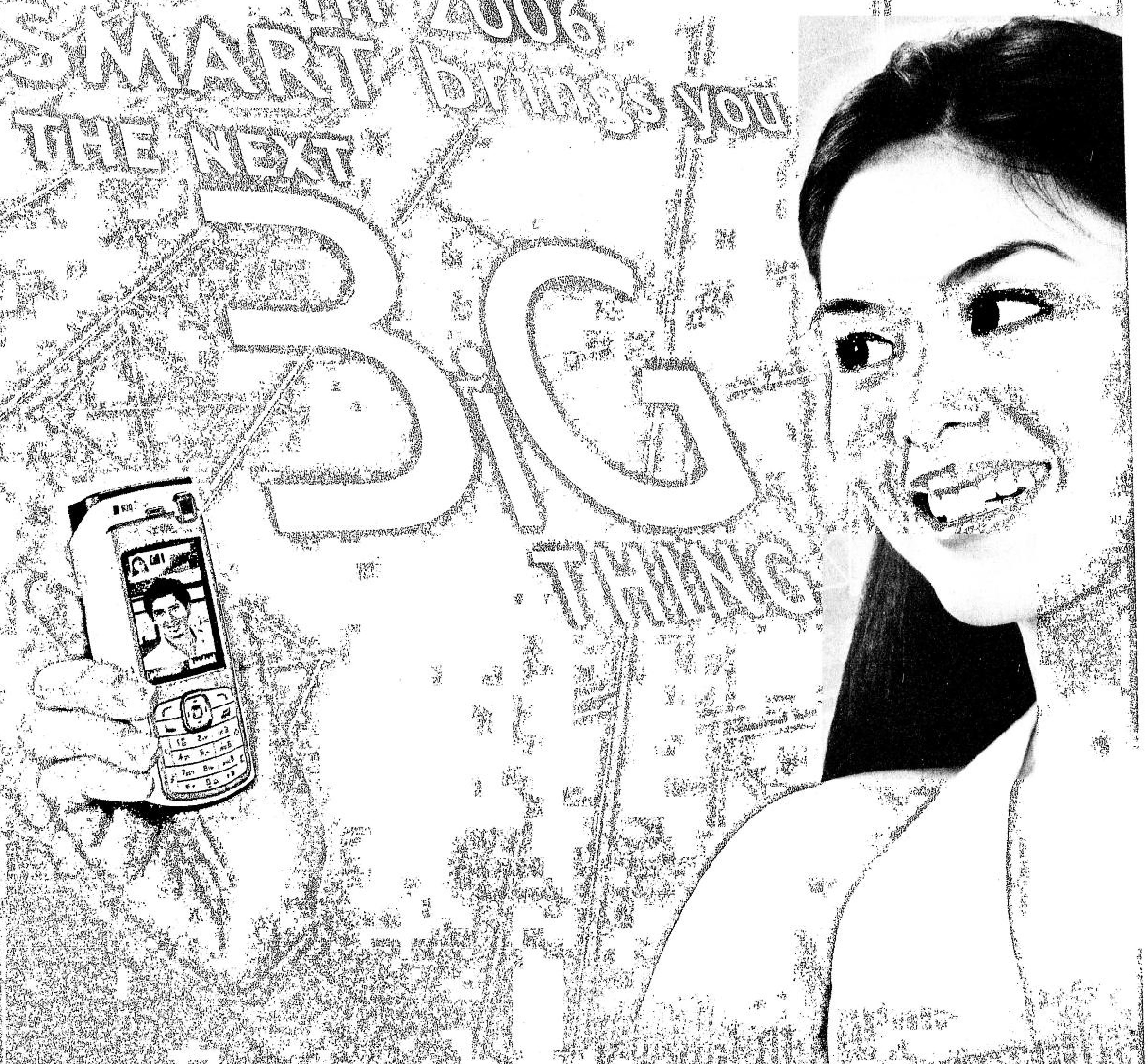

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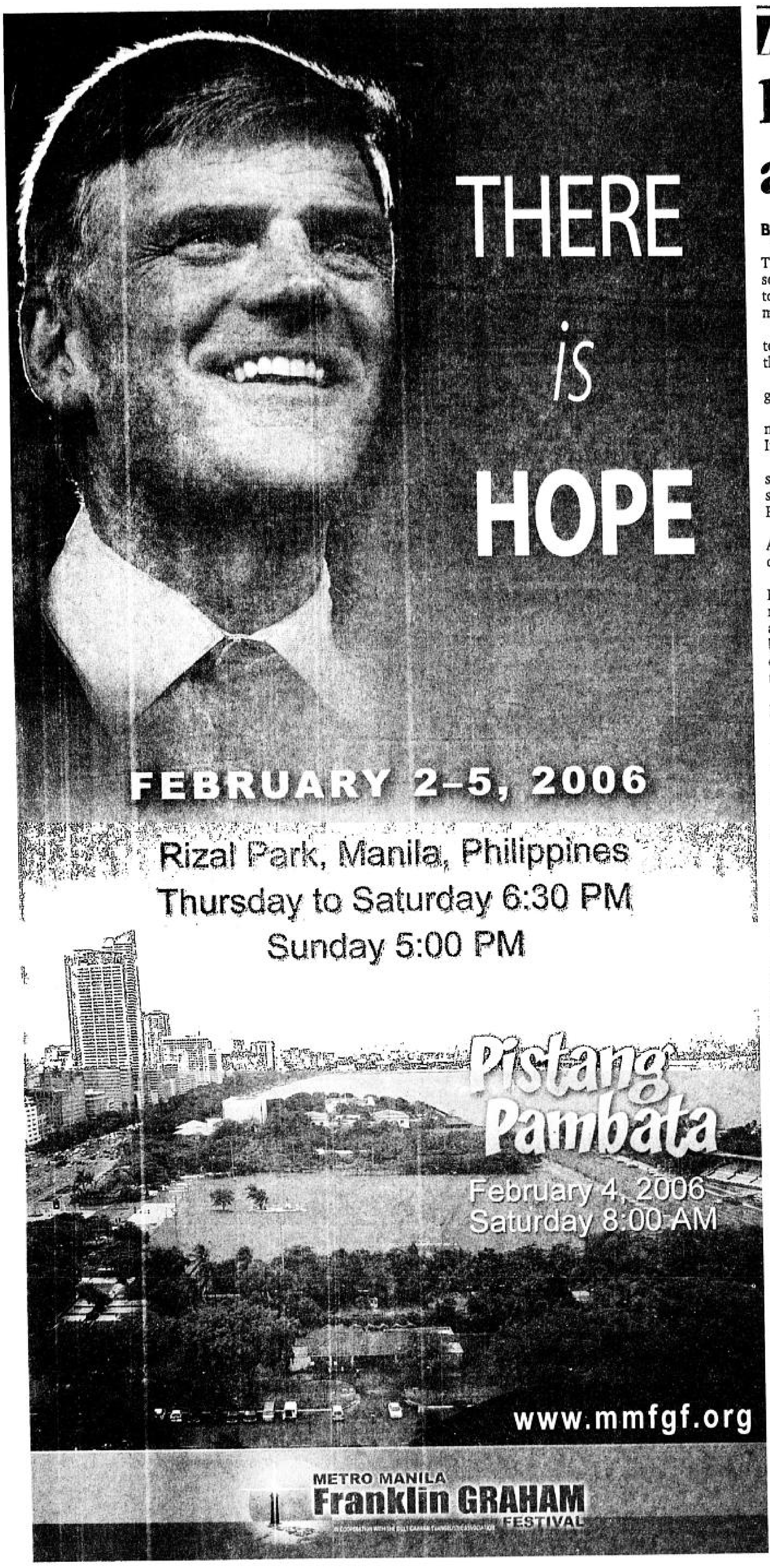

DOT sees 3-M tourist arrivals this year

By Jerome Aning

THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM EXPECTS some 2.8 million to 3 million foreign tourists to arrive this year as the agency's tourism promotion drive goes full blast.

Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano said tourism revenues could reach P13 billion if the target is achieved.

Last year, the country hit its 2.6 million target in foreign tourist arrivals.

Durano said the DOT would continue its market-specific drive for new targets such as India, Russia and Australia.

The department's promotional activities start this year with the holding of the 25th Association of Southeast Asian Nations Tourism Forum in Davao City next week.

ATF is a regional cooperation within the Asean to promote Southeast Asia as one tourist destination to the global travel market.

Themed this year as "Celebrating the Many Faces of Asean," tourism ministers from the region and from East Asian countries, as well as over 3,000 foreign and local delegates, will be attending the forum from Jan. 13 to 21 to discuss new market strategies and common tourism industry concerns.

Durano said the DOT's "hidden agenda" in hosting the ATF was to improve Mindanao's potential as a tourist destination, with Davao serving as the island's "gateway and show-window."

He said he had high hopes that the ATF would change Davao's image from a terror target to a tourist haven. In 2003, two bomb blasts there killed more than 40 persons and wounded several others.

Durano said the Asean Secretariat approved the holding of the ATF in Davao owing to the city's much improved public security system, transportation infrastructure and scenic attractions.

"Davao City Mayor [Rudy] Duterte assured us that the ATF participants would be safe, sound and secure before, during and after the event. We have contingency plans," Durano told reporters.

The DOT chief said that through the ATF, Davao would gain renown as an international tourist destination like Cebu City, which hosted the ATF in 1998.

Durano said Mindanao and the rest of the country would also benefit from the ATF with the holding of post-conference tours for media and other tourism "opinion-makers" to various Philippine destinations such as Subic, Pagsanjan, Corregidor, Cagayan de Oro, Camiguin, Cebu, Bohol, Palawan, Banawe, Boracay and Sorsogon.

Pawnshops assets now P14B . . .

From page A1

lion in 1995 to P7.7 billion in 2004.

This means that, while the number of pawnshops has been increasing, the amount of assets being pawned by the public has been piling up at an even faster rate.

Only financial options

More importantly, this indicates that pawnshops—much like the widely maligned "5-6" loan business—are the only financial options available to many who either do not have bank accounts or are ineligible for bank loans.

BSP data showed that pawnshops provided a total of P10.1 billion worth of loans to needy clients at the end of 2004, nearly double from the P5.5 billion reported in 1995.

"Business seems to be really good in this industry," Nazareno said. "While some branches are closing down, there are even more branches being opened every month."

The proliferation of pawnshops is due partly to the fact that anyone in need can get money for almost anything of value he cares to part with.

Hottest items: Cell phones

Of late, among the most popular items being pawned are cellular phones. They have overtaken home appliances as the most favored items.

Cell phones have become so marketable that several pawnshops that deal only in these items have sprouted around Metro Manila.

One such place, dubbed Mr. Cell Pawnshop, already has five branches and looks set to expand some more.

Chester Ibarra, who manages the branch on Ninoy Aquino Ave. in Parañaque City, says business is brisk.

Slumdwellers, gamblers

"On the average, we accept seven to ten pawned cell phones per day," he said.

Ibarra has a standardized price matrix for how much each cell phone model is worth on the secondary market, and the "loanable" amounts vary from model to model. A client can borrow as much as P600 for a low-end Nokia 3310 model. A higher-end model, like a Nokia 7610, can fetch P7,000.

Mr. Cell Pawnshop's clientele also varies.

In the daytime, Ibarra said most clients come from the nearby slums who pawn their 3310s for up to 10 days at a time.

At night, most of his clients are patrons of the nearby Casino Filipino in need of short-term cash to settle obligations incurred at the gaming tables.

Staggering interest rates

These services don't come cheap.

"We charge casino rates," Ibarra said: Borrowers are charged an interest rate of 2 percent per day on top of one-time fees and charges—a staggering 728 percent per annum.

The rates are clearly usurious compared to a normal credit card loan, which can carry a rate of up to 42 percent per annum, but still significantly cheaper than borrowing from "5-6" loan sharks, whose rates could go as high as 1,040 percent a year.

Despite this, Ibarra said he had many repeat clients, pawning their cell phones when short on cash and redeeming them when they're in better financial shape.

Ending up at Greenhills

Every now and then, some clients default on their "loans" and allow their pawned items to be foreclosed.

When that happens, Ibarra said, the cell phones are sold to dealers in Greenhills who, in turn, sell them in the second-hand market.

A visit to Greenhills reveals that a second-hand Nokia 3310 retails for P1,600, on the average, representing a lucrative 160-percent mark-up shared between the pawnshop and the retailer.

Whatever the item pawned, however, it is clear from trends that pawnshops will continue to be a lucrative industry for as long as the country remains perpetually "poised for economic takeoff."

Pawnshop watchdog

BSP's Nazareno said her department plans to watch the industry more closely, especially in the aspect of consumer protection, given the increasing number of people running to pawnshops.

For Mila Batan, pawnshops will continue to be an important source of cash in times of emergencies.

A few months ago, she pawned her daughter's bracelet to help her pay some bills.

"Sometimes, you really need the money, and no one can lend you any," she said. "It's good that there are pawnshops you can go to."

It is a sentiment pawnshops are counting on.

(Tomorrow: The cell phone load craze)

How to start . . .

From page A1

municipal buildings. Application forms are also available at DTI's website, http://www.dti.gov.ph. Only Filipinos may own a pawnshop organized as a single proprietorship. For partnerships and corporations, foreign ownership should be limited to 30 percent.

3. Secure a business permit from the city or municipality where pawnshop will be located.

4. Register with the BSP. See http://www.bsp.gov.ph/regulations/forms.htm for the complete list of requirements. These include permits from the DTI or SEC and the local government, an information sheet, personal data sheets, bank certification of at least P100,000 capital and location sketch.

5. Pay the processing fee of P1,000.

6. It will take two to three weeks for the BSP to process your application. Make sure you open your business within six months after the application is approved or your permit will be revoked.

Jamie Alarcon, Chona Galang, PDI Research

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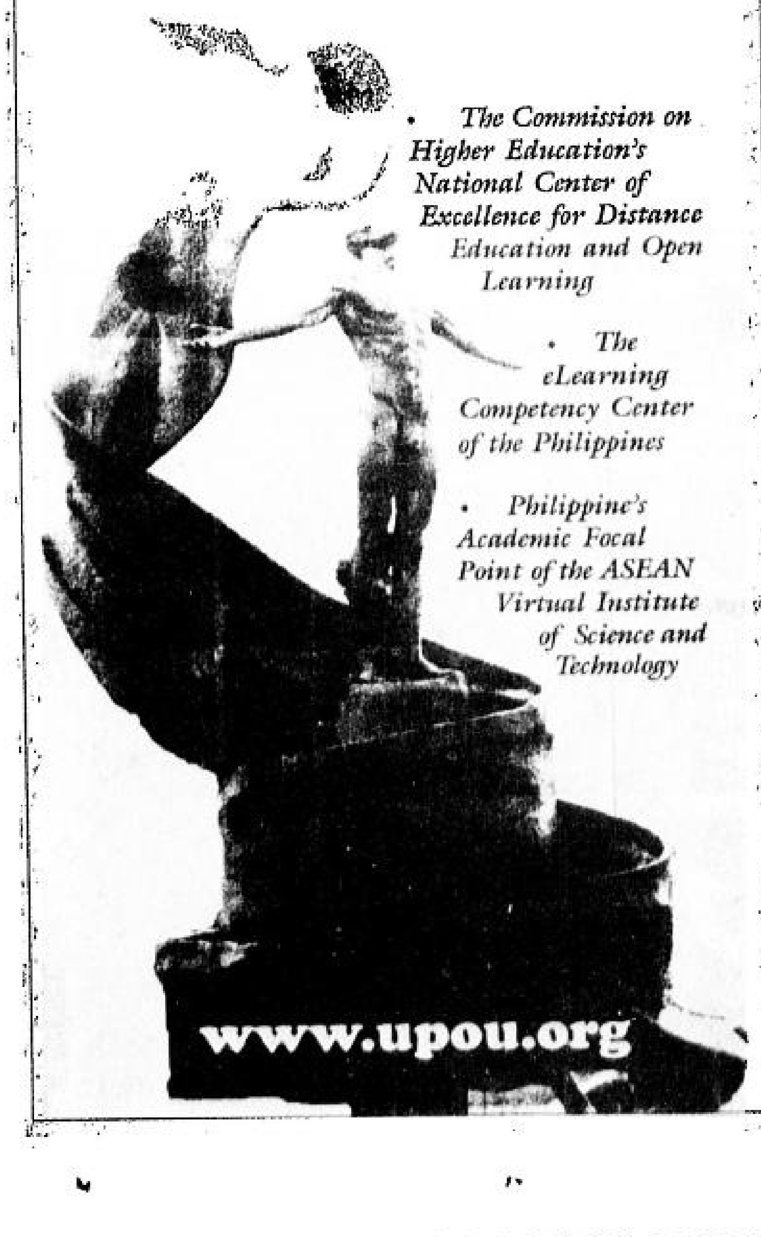

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Video Call 1

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Live from Cebu. November 2005
Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala, President and CEO of Ayala Corp., showed that the Philippines is ready for the world at the 19th Ad Congress in Cebu. Using a 3G-powered phone, he made a video call to the chairman of the congress and also received a live video call from Manila.

Straight from the Heart. December 2005
A touching moment was made possible when a Filipino family went to Globe's 3G Express at the Glorietta to speak to their sister, Delia Bautista, an OFW based in Singapore. It was an emotional reunion as both sides saw each other for the first time in eight years.

To A Tee. November 2005
One of the highlights of the 2nd CEO Golf Classic Tournament at the Sta. Elena Golf and Country Club in Cabuyao, Laguna was the first live public demonstration of Globe's 3G technology. Over a hundred CEOs and top executives witnessed this momentous event. Users were connected to the tournament website and viewed full videos of their own shots taken during the tournament.

Where The Action Is. December 2005
Globe showcased both 3G and HSDPA at the glittering 23rd South East Asian Games (SEAG). Media reporters got the chance to try Globe's 3G services such as mobile broadband using laptops, as well as audio and video streaming.

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Palace: Only FVR can clear up mystery of secret meeting

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Cynthia D. Balana

MALACAÑANG SAID YESTERDAY only former President Fidel Ramos could clear up the issue of what really transpired during his private meeting with two political stalwarts who want President Macapagal-Arroyo out of office.

"Let's just wait for President Ramos to speak up so that we will know who is really telling the truth," Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said as he insisted that the former leader remained on Ms Arroyo's side.

"*Dapat sa palagay ko naman ay nagsalita na rin si Presidente Ramos kung ano ba talaga ang kanilang pinagusapan* (I think President Ramos should have spoken out by now on what they really talked about)," Ermita said, referring to the meeting on Jan. 2 between Ramos, Senate President Franklin Drilon and former Sen. Vicente (Tito) Sotto III.

Accounts of what the trio discussed in Ramos' Makati City office have been conflicting, with Sotto claiming they touched "somewhat" on a proposed coalition among Ramos and former Presidents Corazon Aquino and Joseph Estrada, and Ramos squelching the idea of an anti-Arroyo alliance involving himself.

Ramos can't be co-opted

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye claimed "unflattering details" about Drilon and Sotto had come out during the meeting while presidential adviser on political affairs Gabriel Claudio said the two anti-Arroyo leaders had tried to recruit Ramos to their side.

Malacañang also belittled the meeting as no more than a "social call."

"I think whatever President Ramos told them has already been published (and this should) remove from their minds the idea that they could persuade President Ramos into joining with them in their attempt to fight the leadership of President Arroyo," Ermita said.

Ermita spoke in two radio interviews, transcripts of which were released to the media by the Palace press office.

Unifying factor

Ermita said that knowing Ramos to be a leader and a statesman, it would be he who would try to convince the people he talked to to be part of efforts "to unite the leaders of our country and end all factionalisms."

He said Ramos' role had always been that of "a unifying factor" whenever there was discord among the country's leaders and he believed that was what the former President had in mind when he talked to Drilon and Sotto.

But even before Ramos could speak about the meeting, Ermita appeared convinced that the ex-President would reaffirm his support for President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Two meetings

"I talked to him last Dec. 27 and he said that his support for the President was genuine," Ermita said.

Ermita said that Ramos' statement confirming he would attend the meetings of the ruling Lakas-CMD and the Council of State this month was proof of his backing for Ms Arroyo.

Ramos' media consultant Ed Malay earlier said that Ramos was attending those meetings because he was chair emeritus of the party and because he was a former head of government and state.

Ermita admitted that Malacañang was not too keen about having Estrada attend the Jan. 24 council meeting of the country's political and business leaders.

"While all past presidents should attend, we have to consider President Estrada's situation," Ermita said. "We have to determine whether there is an urgency for him to attend and leave his detention cell."

Ousted in a 2001 popular revolt, Estrada is facing plunder charges and is detained in his resthouse in Tanay, Rizal.

Aquino silence

Aquino refused to be drawn into the controversy centering on an opposition proposal for an alliance among her, Ramos and Estrada.

"I have no comment at the moment" Aquino's spokesperson and nephew, Rapa Lopa, quoted her as saying.

Former Agriculture Secretary Horacio "Boy" Morales has said an alliance that would bring together Aquino, Ramos and Estrada would boost opposition efforts to force Ms Arroyo to step down.

Ramos has said such an alliance will not happen but, in an interview over ANC network, declined to categorically declare his support for Ms Arroyo.

Lopa said that Aquino could not say whether she would attend the Council of State meeting in Malacañang since she had not received an invitation.

Aquino will make known her position on the matter once she receives an invitation, Lopa said.

Ramos has scheduled a press conference for Monday presumably to give details of his Jan. 2 meeting with Drilon and Sotto.

Palace: Public interest to determine new Cabinet, other appointments

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG YESTERDAY ASsured the public that any changes made by President Macapagal-Arroyo to her Cabinet, her office and minor government positions would be based on the "public interest."

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye made the statement in response to criticism that Ms Arroyo's appointments had largely been based on personal and political ties, and that the latest Cabinet revamp would be no different.

"The President chooses the members of her official family on the basis of public interest, and any replacements or shifts in [her] team are all aimed at strengthening the fight against poverty, the rule of law and the competitiveness of the Philippines in the world," Bunye said, adding: "Changes in the Cabinet are expected to follow the strategic pace of reforms and programs."

Ms Arroyo marked the first week of the year with the appointment of Jesus Dureza, her adviser on Mindanao affairs, as her new adviser on the peace process; former Sandiganbayan Justice Narciso Nario as commissioner of the Presidential Commission on Good Government, and Gaudencio Mendoza Jr. as finance undersecretary.

The President is moving to firm up the leadership in the Cabinet and top government agencies after her administration was rocked by the resignation of the "Hyatt 10," a group of key government officials, six months ago.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita announced on Friday that Ms Arroyo would sign the appointment papers of the new officials probably this weekend.

Ermita reiterated that the Cabinet revamp would not be broad as it would affect only two or three positions.

Both Ermita and Bunye have refused to comment on speculations on who would make the cut, saying this was Ms Arroyo's "sole and exclusive prerogative."

"Changes in the government are not only being made at the top echelons as it is engaged in streamlining and bolstering the overall capacity and effectiveness of the bureaucracy at all levels," Bunye said.

Mike Defensor . . .

From page A1

yesterday, Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz announced the resignation of Del Rosario and the appointment of Cecilio Lorenzo as his replacement.

According to the statement, Del Rosario had been complaining of chronic neck pain since December 2004. Tests conducted last year showed that he is afflicted with an incurable degenerative disease known as spondylosis or spinal osteoarthritis.

Spondylosis is a degenerative disorder that may cause loss of normal spinal structure and function. Aging is the primary cause of this disease and it affects the cervical, thoracic and lumbar regions of the spine.

Del Rosario's condition was worsened by the "tension and stress" of his duties at the Department of National Defense, the statement said.

It added that despite his resignation and medical condition, Del Rosario would remain a consultant of the DND, focusing on projects promoting the soldiers' morale and welfare.

Del Rosario was appointed to the DND on Feb. 1, 2005. He helped introduce financial and managerial improvements in the department under the Philippine Defense Reform program.

His replacement, Lorenzo, was president and chief operating officer of Infocom Technologies Inc., the Internet company of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and one of the country's biggest Internet service providers. *With a report from Alcuin Papa*

'Strong peso no big deal'

From page A1

The peso has gained more than 6 percent over the past 12 months but Roxas said this has not led to a rollback in the prices of basic goods. The price of processed milk, for instance, is 5 to 8 percent higher than the December 2004 level.

The stock market jumped 15 percent in 2005 but Roxas said this was inconsequential to the masses because less than one percent of Filipinos engaged in equities trading.

The spread on Philippine bonds—or the premium over benchmark US Treasury notes that investors demand for risking to invest in Philippine debt papers—has gone down by roughly 300 basis points, a sign of increased confidence of foreign investors in the Philippines.

Rates remain high

But Roxas carped that mortgage rates, car loans, appliance loans and credit card rates remained high.

He said the administration has to realize that the peso, stock index and bond prices were mere leading indicators of where the economy would be in the next six to 12 months.

Roxas said this would explain why the government had not been getting the credit it deserved for being able to log such scintillating economic data.

"I am cheering that these positive figures will be the future and the main task of this government to ensure that it becomes reality. Aside from crowing about how good the peso or stocks are, the government should tell the people how it will work to fulfill them," the senator said.

Roxas said the biggest challenge of the government was to ensure that these positive figures were converted into the real economy.

"The government must be more assertive in both its policy and approach to bring down these headline statistics into the real economy—a strong peso into lower prices of basic commodities and services; a strong stock market into more public offerings, and low bond prices to lower housing and car loans," he said.

Remove bottlenecks

He said the P35 billion for the pump-priming program should be spent not only for handing out subsidized noodles and rice but in removing bottlenecks that would allow the benefits of a strong peso, stock market and bonds to filter down to the greater number of Filipinos.

As an example of an area that government has to address immediately, Roxas cited the long-delayed connection between the mass rail transit projects in Metro Manila, particularly the Edas MRT's North Edsa station and the LRT 1 Caloocan station, "where eight million commuters will directly benefit."

"I agree that the government should spend for subsidized noodles and rice but not all of it should be spent in just dole-outs. I believe that the government should focus on areas with the biggest impact on a bigger number of Filipinos, such as removing bottlenecks that block the economic gains from filtering down to the masses," Roxas said.

Respect lowly 25¢ coin as symbol of daily heroism

From page A1

coin on a bus, I bet you wouldn't bother looking for it. The coin's not worth the trouble of dirtying your hand on a loathsome bus floor.

A P5 coin would receive more attention. Definitely. It's P5 after all. P3 short of the minimum bus fare. P5 short of a bottle of Pepsi. P9 short of the MRT fare to Ayala from North Avenue. P20 short of a hot fudge sundae.

So, P5 is worth something.

For decoration

Twenty-five centavo coins, however, exist to be abused. That's why some jeepney drivers use them to decorate the dashboards of their jeepneys. It's no longer chic to toss 25-centavo coins during house blessings. Some say the coin would bring bad luck to a household.

There's almost nothing a child in school can buy with 25 centavos. Chocolates cost about P1 apiece. Bond paper is 50 centavos per. Ice cream sold by ambulant vendors come at P5 each.

And since kids generally consider 25 centavos a "useless" coin, they tend to look down on other kids if their *baon* (allowance) consists of 25 centavos. Never mind that their 25 centavos adds up to P5 or more.

I don't think many rich kids will be caught with 25 centavos in their pockets. No way. Paper is the only currency rich kids respect. A Ninoy (P500 bill) would be great for one day's baon. A Roxas (P100 bill) wouldn't be enough.

Part of a bigger whole

Anyone can figure out that 25 centavos is meant to be part of a bigger whole. You can't have a car with three wheels. You've got to have four.

Same with a 25-centavo coin. It's a fourth of P1, so it does have value—but as part of a larger entity. You couldn't have P1 billion if you were short 25 centavos. You'd have exactly P999,999,999.75. No accountant worth his bean counter is going to round that up to P1 billion in a corporate financial statement.

So the point here is that our disrespect for 25-centavo coins might be a symptom of the Filipino's lack of self-respect. Amateur psychoanalysis you might call it.

Obsess on it a bit. Most of us work hard for the money. My late mother used to tell me that each grain of rice was the equivalent of one drop of sweat of the hard-working farmers who toil under a scorching sun. So don't waste rice and food, she'd tell me.

Now, substitute 25-centavo coins for rice grains. Each coin can be seen as the equivalent of one drop of sweat.

Self respect

Realizing that a 25-centavo coin doesn't appear by magic should give you more respect for this downtrodden coin. And for yourself.

And more respect for the millions of Filipinos who valiantly struggle to create better lives for their loved ones. The Filipino rich don't care about the tormented poor and the despairing middle class. Filipino politicians don't give a damn.

For those who do honest labor, practice some self-respect by honoring the forgotten symbols of daily heroism—the 25-, 10- and 5-centavo coins.

Pick up these coins wherever you find them. Save them for the many rainy days ahead. And respect yourself more.

Nene Pimentel's story: Martial law, the musical

From page A1

"Nene" Pimentel, a relentless critic of the dictatorship of former President Ferdinand Marcos who declared martial law in 1972.

The musical features songs written and composed by Pimentel's wife Lourdes, or Bing to friends. Titled "*Pag-ibig Sa Bayan,*" it is not simply a narration of corruption and abuses during the Marcos years, it tells the story of a family based in Mindanao and "how we endured those dark years," Ms Pimentel told the INQUIRER.

The book "My Story" begins a few months after the imposition of martial rule when Pimentel was arrested for the first time. It talks about the Marcos dictatorship from the point of view of Pimentel, who was then mayor of Cagayan de Oro City.

On the other hand, the musical opens with a courtship song "*Dali Nene, Dali,*" with the young Pimentel played by singer-actor Marco Sison and his soon-to-be-wife Bing, played by theater actress Jane Diaz.

Pimentel, now 72, first entered politics as a delegate to the 1971 Constitutional Convention. Two years later, he was detained in Camp Crame for three months for opposing the 1973 Constitution which gave Marcos dictatorial powers.

He was jailed again for leading a demonstration against the farcical Interim Batasan elections in 1978 and again in 1983 on charges of rebellion. In 1985, he was arrested anew, this time for allegedly participating in an ambush in Cebu City.

Pesos and centavos

He refused to post bail of P50,000 which at that time was a large amount of money. But friends and residents contributed what they could—pesos and centavos—to bail him out.

In the song "Buhos ng Biyaya," Ms Pimentel recalls the outpouring of support for her husband and wrote:

"*Nakikita ko buhos ng biyaya*
Nararamdaman ko pag-ibig ng kapwa
Sino sino ang makakapagsabi, himala ang nangyayari
Sino ang mag-aakala, nakikikita ang kamay ng maykapal
Kailangan ang pera, dumarating
Kailangan ang pagkain, may nagdadala...
(I see an outpouring of grace
I feel love from my fellow men
Who could have predicted this miracle
Who would have thought God would lend a hand
Money was needed, it came.
Food was needed, someone brought it ...)"

Pimentel said he had yet to read or listen to the songs composed by his wife, a long-time composer.

Please don't cry

Pimentel said his wife helped him endure his incarceration and kept the family together.

When soldiers took him away the first time, he said he asked his wife not to cry.

"Her tears would have torn me apart. That would have made me vulnerable," Pimentel said.

There is a scene in the musical which illustrates the poignancy of the incident.

"*Huwag kang umiyak mahal ko*
(Nene sings to Bing)
Huwag kang lumuha irog ko
Di ko kayang malasin
Ikaw ay nagdurusa rin
Giliw, kailangan kita ngayon
Kailangan kita ngayon.
(Don't cry, my love
Don't shed tears, my darling
I cannot bear to see
You suffer, too
My love, I need you now
I need you now)."

Dole-outs, God's mercy

His family subsequently survived on dole-outs, he said.

"And God's mercy," Ms Pimentel added.

There are three songs which tackle the family's Catholic upbringing. The couple has six grown children, including lawyer Koko Pimentel, who topped the bar in 1990.

Pimentel's "My Story," which he began writing two years ago, opens with his arrest, moving on to feature political personalities such as the slain Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr., his wife Corazon who succeeded Marcos, her successor Fidel Ramos, former Vice President Salvador Laurel, Sen. Joker Arroyo and Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, among others. It culminates with the inside stories that paved the way for the four-day People Power revolt on Edsa that toppled the Marcos dictatorship.

The book, with foreword by former President Aquino and Sen. Joker Arroyo, promises to be scathing. It will be in bookstores next month in time for the 20th anniversary of Edsa I.

"It will reveal things that people in high places may not like to read," Pimentel said.

He said that Enrile learned about the book years ago. "He saw my early drafts at the session hall (of the Senate)," Pimentel said. "He joked about it, especially the title. I presume he knows what it would be about."

In May 2004, Pimentel and Enrile both ran under the ticket of presidential candidate and movie actor Fernando Poe Jr., who died in December the same year.

First meeting

Given a choice, Pimentel said he would rather not have run with Enrile, but it was FPJ's party that made the decision. An all-angel ticket was as impossible as an all-devil ticket, he said.

Pimentel and Marcos are both Ilocanos. In his book, Pimentel recalled his first meeting with Marcos, arranged by fellow Ilocanos in 1965.

Marcos wanted a leader in Mindanao to neutralize the people's support for former Vice President Emmanuel Pelaez, he said.

According to Pimentel, Marcos told him: "Just go to Malacañang and have your picture taken with me. I will take care of the rest."

Where's Cory?

Pimentel's book also answers the often-asked question: Where was Cory at the height of the Edsa revolution?

On the first day of the revolution, Pimentel, Aquino and other opposition leaders were in Cebu.

"Cory was advised to secure herself somewhere, even outside the Philippines. She rejected the advice and headed for Manila," Pimentel said.

"Our people need us there," he quoted Aquino as telling the men in the group.

INQUIRER columnist Nestor Torre directs the musical which opens on Jan. 21 at the Meralco Theater.

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Zawahiri to Bush: Admit defeat in Iraq

DUBAI—AL-QAIDA NUMBER TWO AYMAN AL-Zawahiri called on US President George W. Bush to "admit defeat" in Iraq, saying any future US troop withdrawal would be a "victory" for Islam, in a video broadcast by Al-Jazeera on Friday.

"Bush, you must admit that you have been defeated in Iraq and that you are being defeated in Afghanistan and that you will soon be defeated in Palestine, with the help and strength of God," said Zawahiri, sitting with an assault rifle at his side.

"Today I congratulate and bless the Islamic nation for the victory of Islam in Iraq," he said. "You remember, my Muslim brothers, saying to you more than a year ago that the departure of Americans from Iraq was only a matter of time."

"There they are today ... pleading to get out of Iraq and begging for negotiations with the mujahedeen," said the bespectacled Zawahiri who was last seen in a video in September in which he claimed the July 7 London bombings.

Zawahiri, like al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden, has a $25-million bounty on his head.

"Bush announced, at the end of November, that he was going to withdraw (some) troops from Iraq, but he justified his retreat by saying that Iraqi troops have reached a good level and that he was not going to announce a (final) withdrawal timetable," he continued.

"You laid down your withdrawal timetable a long time ago," Zawahiri jibed at Bush, emphasizing his words with a wagging right forefinger.

The White House in November announced a gradual drawdown of the around 150,000 US troops currently in Iraq amid increasing domestic criticism of the number of US troop deaths.

Under the plan, 50,000 could come home this year with a "significant number" of the rest returning over the course of the following year, although Bush refused to say when US forces might quit Iraq entirely.

The video follows a letter attributed to Zawahiri, believed to be the main strategist and key ideologist in the al-Qaida hierarchy, and addressed to al-Qaida in Iraq leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi that surfaced in October.

The letter showed al-Qaida positioning itself for a US defeat in Iraq, but struggling to curb Zarqawi whose campaign of beheadings and attacks on Shiites is costing the extremist movement popular support.

However, an Internet statement attributed to al-Qaida denounced that letter, which Washington dated to July, as untrue.

In Friday's video, the Egyptian-born Zawahiri went on to criticize the Muslim Brotherhood for taking part in Egyptian elections last year saying they were fulfilling America's aim of recognizing the "Jewish presence" in the region.

Zawahiri said the US administration had promised the Islamist party, which became the largest parliamentary opposition bloc following the November/December vote, power as long as they were "false Muslims."

"When you become secular and are but false Muslims like (Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip) Erdogan we (the US) will allow you to take power on condition you forget sharia (Islamic law) and welcome the presence of Crusader bases in your country and recognise the Jewish presence," Zawahiri said.

Zawahiri also accused the Arab League of having served Washington's interests by hosting an Iraq reconciliation conference in November to "justify" a US withdrawal, slamming the pan-Arab body as "old, dumb and deaf." *AFP*

AL-QAIDA number two Ayman al-Zawahiri giving a speech in al-Jazeera television show. AFP

Extra armor could have saved Marines, study shows

A SECRET PENTAGON STUDY HAS found that as many as 80 percent of the Marines who have been killed in Iraq from wounds to their upper body could have survived if they had had extra body armor. Such armor has been available since 2003, but until recently the Pentagon has largely declined to supply it to troops despite calls from the field for additional protection, according to military officials.

The ceramic plates in vests now worn by the majority of troops in Iraq cover only some of the chest and back. In at least 74 of the 93 fatal wounds that were analyzed in the Pentagon study of Marines from March 2003 through June 2005, bullets and shrapnel struck the Marines' shoulders, sides or areas of the torso where the plates do not reach.

Thirty-one of the deadly wounds struck the chest or back so close to the plates that simply enlarging the existing shields "would have had the potential to alter the fatal outcome," according to the study, which was obtained by The New York Times.

The vulnerability of the military's body armor has been known since the start of the war. Still, the Marine Corps did not begin buying additional plates to cover the sides of their troops until last September, when it ordered 28,800 sets, Marine officials acknowledge.

The Army, which has the largest force in Iraq, is still deciding what to purchase, according to Army procurement officials. They said the Army was deciding between various sizes of plates to give its 130,000 soldiers, adding that they hoped to issue contracts this month.

Additional forensic studies by the Armed Forces Medical Examiner's unit that were obtained by The Times indicate that about 340 American troops have died solely from torso wounds. *New York Times News Service*

Israel braces for end of era as Sharon still critically ill

JERUSALEM—ISRAEL braced Saturday for the end of an era as Prime Minister Ariel Sharon remained critically ill in a medically-induced coma after undergoing more surgery to stop bleeding in his brain.

The demise of the 77-year-old, the one-time arch hawk who pulled Israeli settlers out of the Gaza Strip, has sparked fears of new turmoil in a region struggling to find the path to peace after decades of conflict.

Israel's neighbors and allies were all keeping a close eye on Sharon's battle for life in the intensive care unit at Jerusalem's Hadassah hospital, with US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice canceling a trip to Asia.

The plight of Sharon meant that Israelis, no strangers to times of crisis, were marking the Jewish Sabbath in a particularly mournful mood.

Doctors were not scheduled to issue any bulletins on Sharon's health until after the end of the Sabbath at sundown, unless there is a sudden change in his condition.

He was declared "critical but stable" on Friday night after a brain scan which followed three hours of surgery which managed to stem the hemorrhaging, his third operation since being rushed to hospital Wednesday night.

Shlomo Mor Yosef, director of Hadassah hospital where Sharon lay in a coma medically induced to let his body rest, said some blood clots which remained from two previous rounds of surgery had been drained.

"Even though the result of the CT (computed tomography) scans are better than yesterday the condition is still critical," he told reporters.

Sharon's chief surgeon said that the veteran general turned politician nicknamed the "Bulldozer" for both his style and physique could still recover.

"He can still pull through," Felix Umansky told AFP. "He is doing better. We need to wait two or three days. We are going to do another scan and if there are no other problems we will start to bring him out of the coma."

Doctors have said privately that he may have suffered irreversible brain damage, leaving the future of Israeli politics hanging in the balance. His closest allies have acknowledged he is unlikely to ever return to office.

Sharon, whose provocative visit to Temple Mount in Jerusalem's Old City in 2000 sparked the second Palestinian intifada, was rushed to hospital late on Wednesday, little more than two weeks after he suffered a minor stroke.

Just days ago, Sharon, who has been prime minister since early 2001, and his new centrist Kadima party had seemed a shoo-in for a general election set for late March. *AFP*

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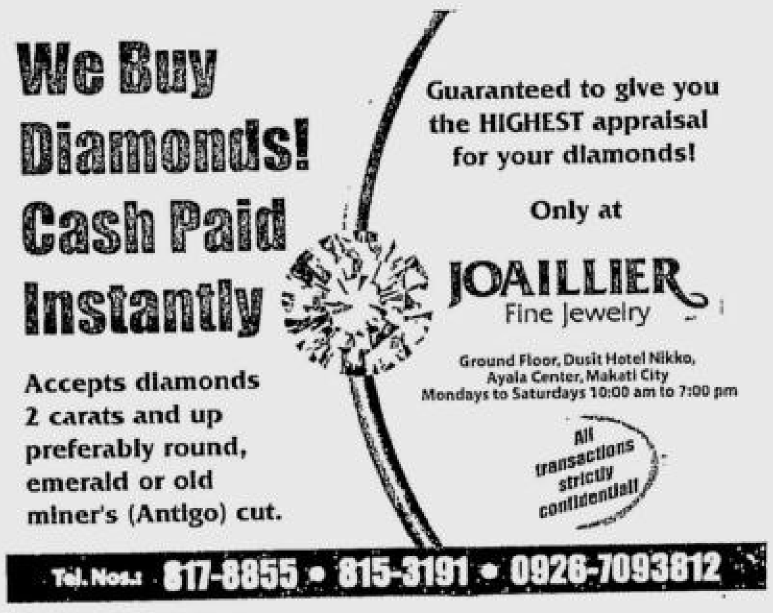

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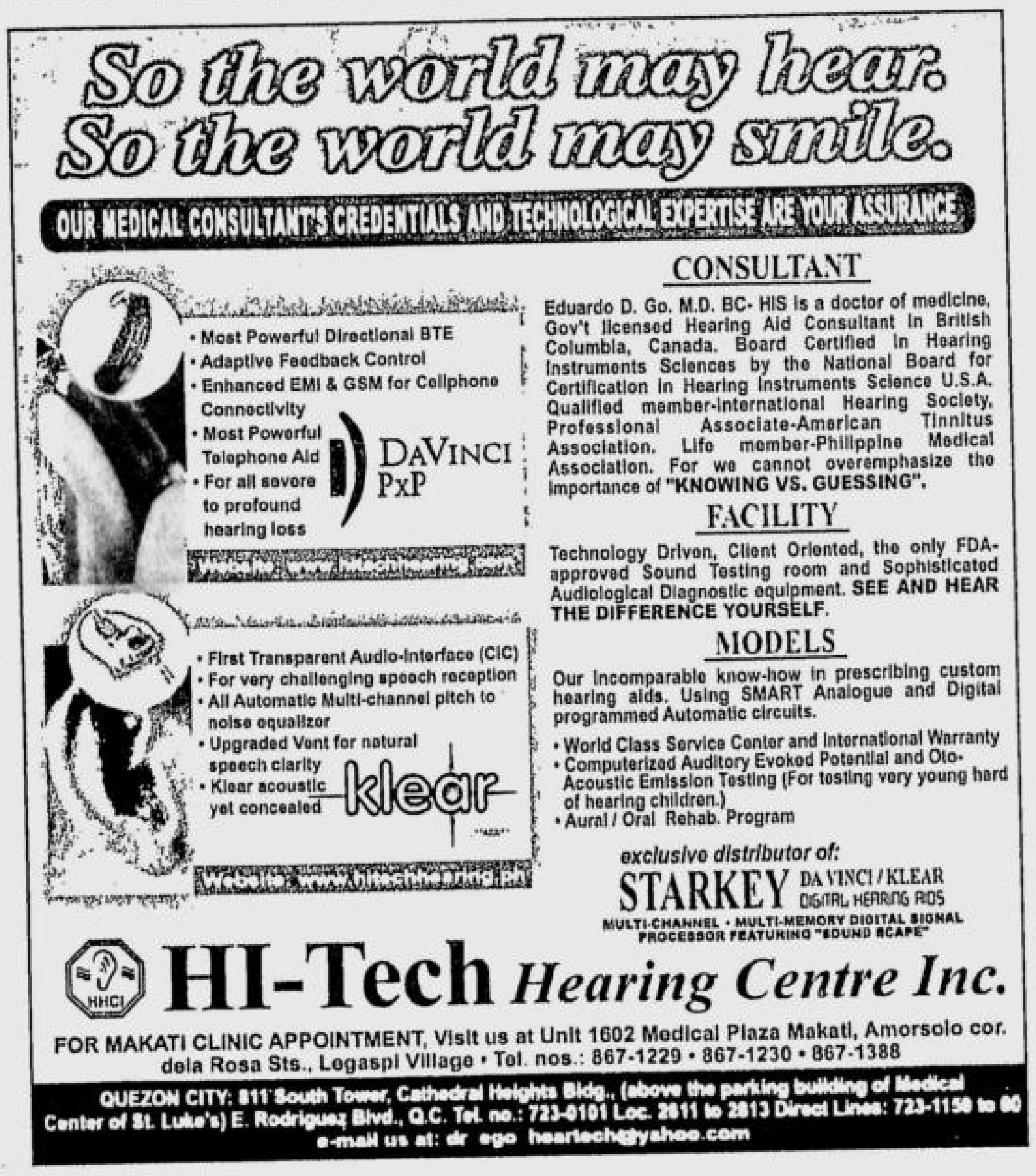

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Suicide attack sinks Sri Lanka Navy gunboat, kills 15

COLOMBO—SUSPECTED TAMIL rebels blew up a naval gunboat Saturday killing 15 Sri Lankan sailors in a suicide attack that caused the biggest military loss of life since a truce began four years ago, the military said.

The pre-dawn attack came as the United States expressed concern over the recent escalation of violence that has stoked fears of a return to civil war in the Indian Ocean island nation torn by ethnic conflict.

"The boat exploded and we believe it is an LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) suicide attack," defense ministry spokesperson Prasad Samarasinghe said.

An explosives-packed fishing boat was believed to have rammed the Israeli-built Dvora-class gunboat which was on a routine patrol outside Trincomalee harbor, 260 km northeast of here, he said.

"There were two gunboats in the area and one saw the other being attacked," Samarasinghe said.

The strike which killed 15 sailors including two officers inflicted the biggest single military loss of life since the Norwegian-brokered truce took effect in February 2002, the military said.

Two sailors from the 17-member crew were rescued by other military craft.

Separatist Tiger guerrillas are known to have carried out suicide attacks against dozens of naval craft in the past using small boats packed with explosives. *AFP*

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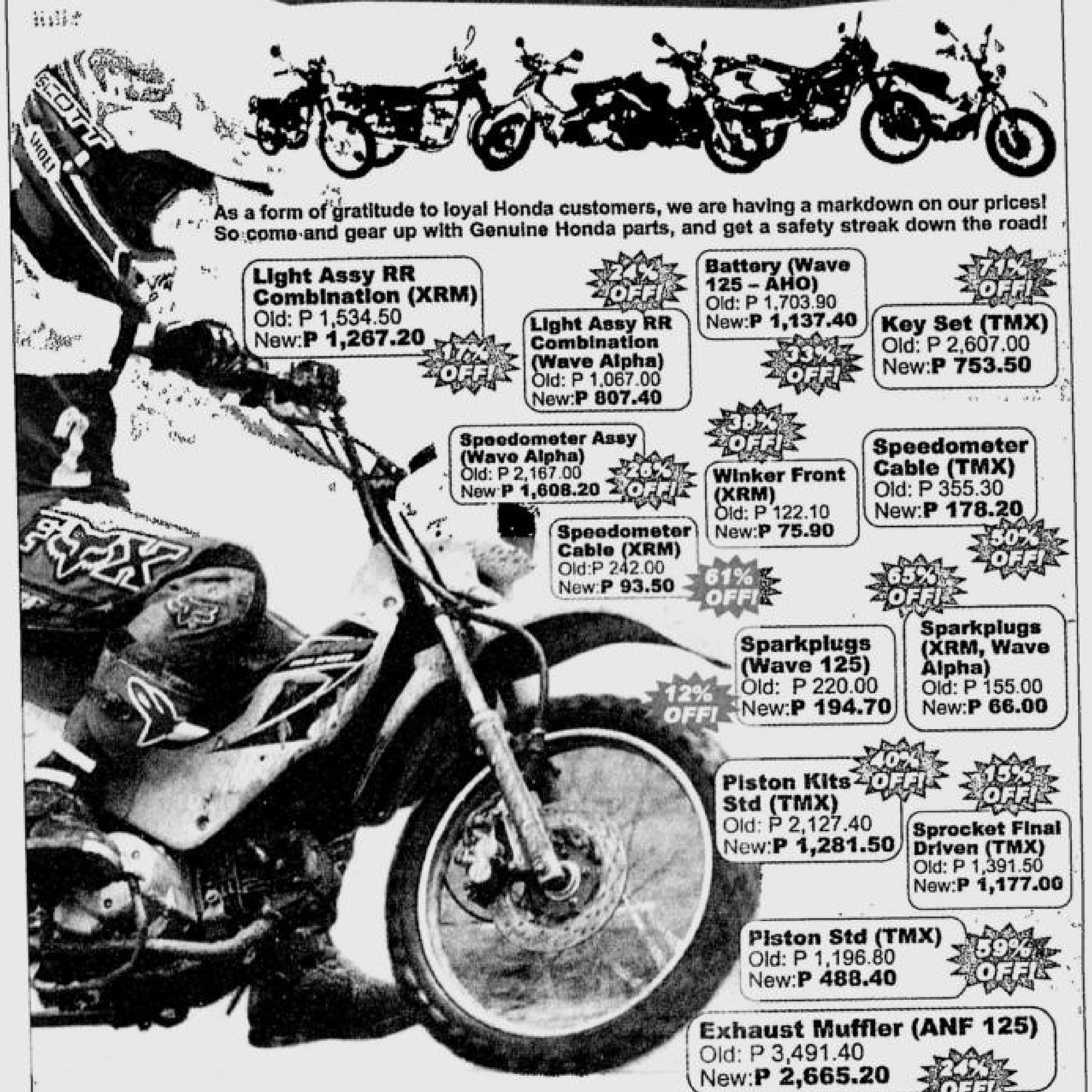

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See posters for details.

CONDURA WORLD CLASS

Per DTI - NCR No. 2804, Series of 2005

Google raises ante, to launch online video store

GOOGLE CEO Larry Page stands next to the VW Touareg Stanley, a robotic car, Jan. 6, at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas. AP

LAS VEGAS—GOOGLE INC. SAID ON FRIDAY the company is expanding into two new fields with an online video store and a computer maintenance service, moves that mark stepped-up challenges to its biggest computer and media rivals, including Apple, Microsoft and Yahoo.

Google co-founder and president Larry Page said the video marketplace would offer free programming, low-cost rentals and outright purchases of premium entertainment and sports shows ranging from episodes of Star Trek to every National Basketball Association league game online, for the first time ever.

Page also introduced at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas a plan to offer any user of Microsoft Corp.'s Windows XP-powered PCs basic software, security and web features on both new and existing machines.

With the product, called Google Pack, the company is promising to help most users set up and maintain their machines in a matter of minutes rather than the hours that many computer users require to get going on a new PC.

"Google Pack is quite exciting," said Page during his keynote address at the show, "It's as easy as going to the Google home page."

Reuters

SOUTH AMERICA
Spectacular CARNIVAL in RIO
Brazil, Argentina, Peru, Iguassu Falls, Mexico (Lady of Guadalupe) via Los Angeles Feb. 27-Mar 15 (US VISA REQUIRED)
PANAGBENGGA Festival + Manaog • Feb.
GRAND ASIA TOUR
Thailand, Cambodia, Malaysia, Vietnam
VIETNAM, CAMBODIA (ANGKOR WAT) Feb. 13 - 19
GRAND INDIA TOUR
Splendorous REPUBLIC DAY PARADE
Taj Mahal, Extn. Kathmandu • Jan. 25-31
US LAND TOURS
9 days West Coast $ 695
7 days East Coast $ 560
8 days East Coast & Canada $ 599
HOLYLAND, JORDAN & EGYPT PROMO!
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WORLDBRIEFS

Mecca tragedy toll now 76

JEDDAH, Saudi Arabia—Saudi authorities have given up the hunt for survivors from the collapse of a hostel in the holy city of Mecca that killed 76 pilgrims, the latest tragedy to strike the hajj. Interior Minister Prince Nayef bin Abdul Aziz was due to hold an emergency meeting to discuss the disaster on Saturday, on the eve of the start of the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, the holiest site in Islam. Ministry spokesperson Gen. Mansur al-Turki said 76 people were killed and 62 others wounded when the aging and overcrowded multistory building collapsed on Thursday. He said the dead consisted of 48 men and 28 women. "Saudis, French nationals of Arab origin and Yemenis are among the dead," he said, adding that 40 bodies had yet to be identified.

AFP

Fujimori stands in Peru poll

FUJIMORI AFP

LIMA—The daughter of former President Alberto Fujimori has registered his candidacy for Peru's upcoming presidential vote, defying a government ruling that he is not eligible to stand in elections until 2011. Fujimori, 67, has been detained in Chile since early November. He arrived unannounced in Santiago from Japan, planning to launch a 2006 campaign for Peru's presidency, but was instead arrested at Lima's request. Though his daughter, Keiko, entered his name as a candidate in the presence of dozens of supporters on Friday, there is still a chance the electoral court could reject him. Peruvian investigators have prepared a series of corruption and human rights charges against Fujimori stemming from his 1990-2000 presidency and are seeking his extradition from Chile. Among the cases are the alleged murder by government agents of 25 people in Barrios Altos, a poor district of Lima.

AFP

Viagra anti-counterfeit tag

NEW YORK—Pfizer Inc., in a move to thwart counterfeit Viagra, on Friday said it has included special radio frequency identification tags on all packages of its anti-impotence pill to verify they are the authentic Pfizer product. The world's biggest drugmaker said the new technology, which is difficult and costly to duplicate, would create barriers "for criminals who might attempt to counterfeit our products."

Reuters

Largest plasma panel plant

TOKYO—Matsushita Electric Industrial Co. plans to build the world's largest plasma panel factory at a cost of $1.4 billion to prepare for meeting surging global demands, reports said Saturday. The world's largest consumer electronics maker will build the new plant in Amagasaki, 400 km west of the capital Tokyo, which will have an annual capacity of six million panels, the reports said. The technology giant, which makes the Panasonic brand, wants to begin construction as early as this summer, with the plant set to go onstream in summer 2007, according to Kyodo and the business daily Nihon Keizai Shimbun. Matsushita aims to maintain its top share in the global plasma TV market and win the battle against the competing liquid crystal display (LCD) camp, which is also pursuing larger screen sizes and promoting cost reductions.

AFP

Woman kills trees for view

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—A Vancouver woman pleaded guilty on Thursday to poisoning several trees that border the city's downtown Stanley Park to improve the view of the ocean from her condominium. June Matheson admitted she purchase herbicide in the United States and applied it to five trees in the spring of 2004 in an effort kill them. Three trees later died, according to a court document. A witness told police that Matheson, a well known interior designer, had complained that the city-owned trees, which ranged in height between 25 and 45 feet, had grown too tall and she wanted to "get rid of them." Prosecutors said Matheson may have felt an improved view of nearby English Bay would increase the value of her condo, which she sold in October 2004 for nearly C$1.7 million ($1.5 million).

Reuters

Let's talk about teens and money.

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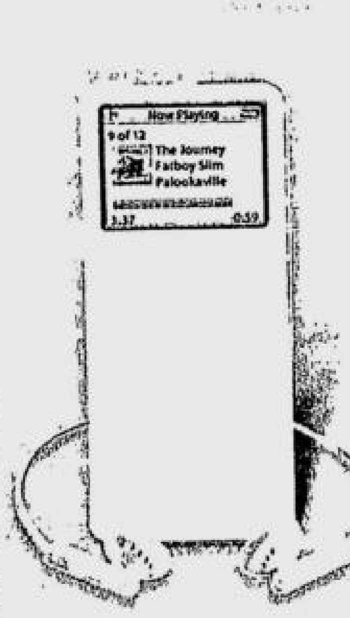

New BPI Jumpstart Savings

As your teens get older and more independent, they need to learn how to handle their own money. That's why there's the new BPI Jumpstart Savings Account.

Jumpstart lets your teens and even pre-teen kids learn the basics of money management:

It teaches them the habit of saving.
Transfer your teen's allowance electronically to his interest-earning account. Your child can even set a "Guaranteed Savings" amount that will always be kept intact.

It helps them manage their expenses.
Jumpstart allows up to four free withdrawals in a month, so your teen learns how to plan his spending and manage his budget.

It empowers them.
Your teen can shop safely without cash by simply presenting his Jumpstart ATM card at over 8,200 accredited Express Payment System (EPS) establishments. He can also use his Jumpstart Card to reload his Globe or Touch Mobile prepaid cellphone.

It promotes value-for-money.
Jumpstart Savings gives your teen great discounts and privileges at popular establishments, so he can make his money go a longer way.

Teach your teens the basics of money management. Make them moneywise.
Visit any BPI or BPI Family Savings Bank branch or Express Banking Center near you or you can call 89-100 or log on to www.bplexpressonline.com.

Enjoy privileges at the following Jumpstart Zones:
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Get special promo coupons from Jollibee when you get your Jumpstart card.
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Promo Period, November 9 to February 15, 2006

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OPINION

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Power of the local

EDITORIAL

SINCE THE EVENTS OF FRIDAY, JULY 8, 2005, there has been renewed appreciation of the role that local governments play in national politics. On that day, the Arroyo administration almost buckled under because of sudden, overwhelming pressure. The late arrival of ex-president Fidel Ramos in Malacañang was seen by many as the untipping point, the steadying factor that rallied the President's men and convinced the commander in chief to stay put. (To this day, there are former Palace insiders who swear President Macapagal-Arroyo was all but ready to sign a letter of resignation.) But on that day, too, Malacañang played host to a steady stream of local government officials, all pledging their support for the President.

Their expression of support was not only fulsome; it was also effective. That is, it was backed with real power. The governors and mayors who continue to back the President have budgets set by law, cooperative or even compliant bureaucracies and, not least, real influence over local police forces.

Three weeks later, and as an unmistakable token of her gratitude, President Macapagal-Arroyo filled the session hall of Congress with local executives, a hundred of them, during her State of the Nation Address. The guest list for that speech was an eloquent testimony of the power of the local.

But the power of the local also lies in example. For the longest time, some of the most inspiring initiatives in governance have taken place on the local front. In many ways, the Magsaysay award given to Naga Mayor Jesse Robredo was an early, premonitory acknowledgment of the achievements of the new breed—that is, raised after the Local Government Code took effect—of local executive.

Last week we received another welcome reminder. The Galing Pook Foundation (the phrase literally means "place of excellence," but a more colloquial translation, such as "hot zone," may be closer to the truth) awarded outstanding local governments for "exemplary local governance programs."

Two central Visayan provinces won top awards for continuing excellence. Bohol won for its programs to protect its coastal resources, conserve its cultural heritage, and develop its eco-tourism industry. Oriental Negros was recognized for setting up agricultural development centers at village level, promoting the practices and virtues of old-fashioned gardening, and improving children's nutrition.

Bohol Governor Erico Aumentado told the INQUIRER that the programs the awards recognized succeeded because of the people's support. An all-too-understandable excess of populist zeal? But Bohol's coastal resource management initiative, to take just one example, is in fact based on extensive collaboration with fishermen who used to kill dolphins and whales. "Now, they are the guardians of the marine resources. From hunters, they have become the protectors," Aumentado said.

As the world knows by now, Bohol's eco-tourism industry has also been going great guns, with tourist arrivals skyrocketing from 95,000 in 2001 to over 313,000 in 2004.

Oriental Negros received recognition from the foundation, in part, for a simple but effective back-to-basics program.

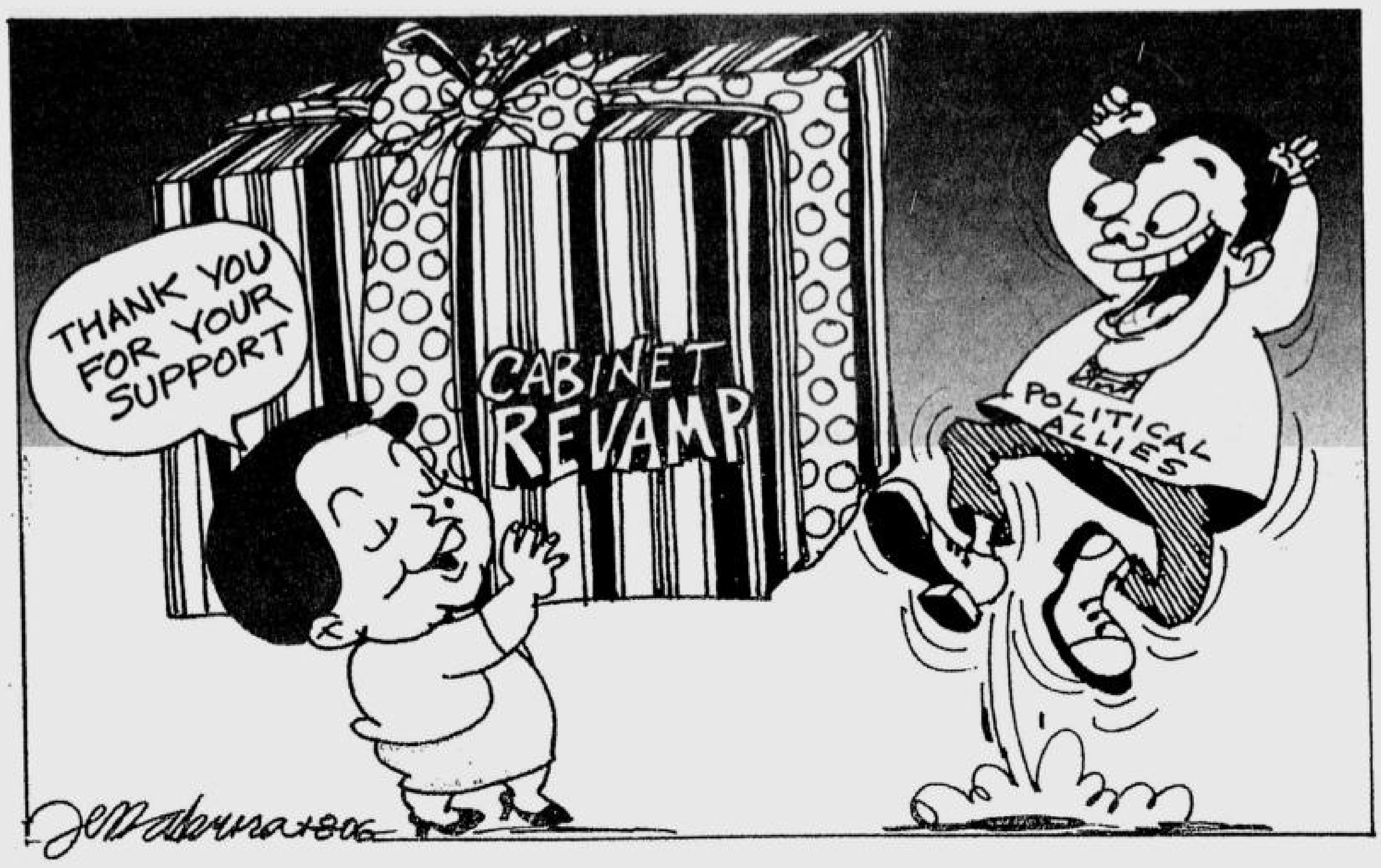
Oriental Negros Governor George Arnaiz pointed to his province's *Gulayan at Palaisdaan Alay sa Kabataan* (Vegetable Farm and Fish Pond for the Youth) program, chosen as one of the Top 10 outstanding local government programs for 2005, as a continuing effort to improve nutrition among grade school children.

The children, he said, were given garden tools, fertilizers and vegetable seeds for planting in school plots. In 2002, the first year of the program, the provincial government invested P2 million to train some 700 teachers in the art and science of gardening.

The statistics are heartening: In three years, the program added almost 140 hectares of vegetable-producing land; and the malnutrition rate fell from 39 percent in 2002 to 23 percent in 2005.

"It is a very simple and cheap program that's simply going back to the basics," Arnaiz said. "We used to garden when we were young, but we forgot about it."

Politics aside, this is the kind of reminder of that hoary notion of empowerment—power, that is, in the actual hands of the people—we all want, and our country needs.



Tempest at San Beda

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

NOW THAT THE YULETIDE IS OVER, LET ME relate the interesting issue of academic freedom at the San Beda College of Law, where I was a professor and bar reviewer in Political Law and International Law for 20 years.

San Beda is a distinguished law school that has produced an impressive number of bar topnotchers led by former Supreme Court Justice Florenz D. Regalado, whose bar rating of 96.7 percent remains unsurpassed to date. Among its more prominent alumni are the late Raul Roco, Rene Saguisag, Antonio Martinez, Antonio Nachura, and many other successful practitioners. .

One of the important features of the academic discipline of San Beda College is its retention policy providing that any student who flunks twice in any subject will be ineligible for enrollment in the succeeding semester. This is a condition every applicant for admission to the law school must accept in writing before he may be enrolled.

This rule has been rigidly enforced over the years with beneficent results. The elimination of students who do not come up to its academic standards has given the college an enviable record in the bar examinations and burnished the pride of San Beda lawyers in their alma mater.

This semester, however, this policy was not applied. Three senior students who had failed twice in Torts and Damages (a bar examination subject) were originally disqualified under the rule but, upon their request for reconsideration, were allowed to re-enroll. This was done upon recommendation of Dean Virgilio B. Jara to the Father Rector, who approved it.

Upon learning of this irregularity, the Law faculty registered a strong protest with the Father Rector. His excuse was that he had acted "in the exercise of a discretionary power that is inherent in my position as Rector-President of the College."

One faculty member disagreed and immediately resigned. In his letter to Dean Jara, he wrote in part:

"I regret I cannot but take strong exception and express my disappointment in your recent decision, as affirmed by our Rector, to re-admit students who have failed twice in the same subject. I view this radical departure from what has been consistently practiced by your predecessors as both unwarranted and unfair and may well lead to the 'commercialization' of our institution, which I have come to cherish dearly.

"I view this action of our Rector as a clear sign that, unlike his predecessors, he is determined to undermine our autonomy with respect to our College's admission and retention policies. If this were to be tolerated now, what would prevent him from later on changing or 'reconsidering' the grades we give our students? He can well claim to possess as well the authority, or the discretion, to interfere in our academic freedom as professors.

"I would not be effective as a teacher in an academic atmosphere which allows unjustified intrusions in the determinations of the faculty. We are responsible professors with the interest and welfare of our institution and our students at heart. I feel that, at the very least, we ought to be trusted to do what becomes us as teachers."

Dean Jara read the letter, abruptly said. "Okay," and without further comment wrote on it the single word, "Accepted."

The reaction of the faculty members was to invoke their academic freedom and deny the "inherent discretion" the Father Rector claimed he possessed to reverse their academic decisions. The academic regulations embodied in the Students' Code, they argued, "cannot be reviewed, suspended or disregarded by the Rector or the Board of Trustees."

"The Dean cannot abdicate faculty authority over academic matters by choosing not to make a stand or by allowing or even voluntarily asking the Rector or the Board of Trustees to interfere," which was what Dean Jara had done.

"The members of the faculty are members of the legal profession and are in the best position to train students who aspire to join them in the same profession."

"To be candid, a number of faculty members have already expressed their intention to resign from the College of Law. However, they were prevailed upon to defer any final decision so we can have a final dialogue with you regarding this matter."

In their subsequent dialogue, Father Rector Anscar J. Chupungco simply repeated that he had exercised his discretion in representation of the owners of the school who, he added, had approved his decision. He did not categorically answer if his discretion covered the right to order the admission of students disqualified by the faculty. But his order was admission enough.

I feel that the discretion claimed by the Father Rector impinged on the academic freedom of the professors who certainly know more about the competence of their students than the highest administrative official of the College. I am disappointed that, for all their principled objection, they obediently surrendered that precious freedom they had so vigorously invoked and defended as teachers of the law.

The lone teacher who resigned said he did so because he is the son of his father. His name is Carlo L. Cruz, and I am his proud father.

Honesty, humility and obedience

MOMENTS

Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD

FR. RAYMOND SORIANO, SVD, MY CLASSMATE who is now assigned to Australia, writes about this incident: A lawyer, driving on a country road, encountered a crowd in one intersection. Thinking cleverly and wanting to throw his weight around to get to the scene, he shouted "Let me through! I am the son of the victim!" Upon hearing this, the crowd made way for him and, lo and behold, lying in front of everyone was a dead pig run over by a car.

* * *

In today's Gospel (Mt. 2, 1-12), we hear of the Magi who came from afar searching for the baby Jesus, and when they found Him, prostrated themselves in humility and did Him homage. The story of the Magi remind us that the way to find God is not through deceit and pride, but through honesty and humility. Dishonest and proud people can never truly find God because they are so caught up in their lies and personal ambitions. They cannot see the guiding star because they see themselves as the superstar.

* * *

What is the difference between King Herod and the Magi, whom we also refer to as the Three Kings? First, King Herod was so attached and glued to his position that he felt threatened and insecure with the news of a newborn king of the Jews. The Magi, on the other hand, also men of position and influence, left everything and became vulnerable pilgrims in search for the truth. When someone becomes so attached to worldly power, money and pleasures, then he/she becomes a prisoner, a miserable prisoner of the world, so paranoid and so afraid of everything and of everyone.

* * *

The other difference between King Herod and the Magi was their attitude toward truth. The Magi sincerely searched for the truth, and were willing to sacrifice for the truth. King Herod, on the other hand, also claimed to search for the truth, but in fact, was just manipulating the truth for his political agenda. The Magi's search for truth was pure, while King Herod's "search" for truth was all "for money and for show." It's really sickening to hear some people tell lies these days and do everything to prevent the truth from coming out.

* * *

The third difference between King Herod and the Magi was their attitude toward the divine. King Herod approached the divine with pride, thinking of it as something he could solve or manipulate. The Magi, on the other hand, were awed by the great mystery, drawn to it, and in humility, prostrated themselves before it. The problem with some people so caught up with worldly power and pride is that they begin to think—and actually live and believe—that everything in this world, even the divine, can be managed, controlled and manipulated with money, "if the price is right."

* * *

One final difference between King Herod and the Magi was obedience. King Herod obeyed no one, while the Magi were obedient to God. King Herod was driven by worldly ambition, while the Magi were led by a star. King Herod held on to control, while the Magi let go of their comfort zones. If only we listen to God and obey His will, then we will not have so many problems in our lives, in our relationships, in our country, in the world.

* * *

King Herod represents the clever people of this world who pursue their worldly agenda by whatever means and at whatever cost. The Magi on the other hand represent the wise people of this world who know the futility of pursuing and holding on to earthly power, treasure and fame; and so they take the road of honesty, humility and obedience instead. Which one are you? Clever or wise?

* * *

An Epiphany moment, a revelation of the divine, dawned on me last Dec. 30 during a Christmas gift-giving in Pangasinan. While everybody was busy elbowing each other to get more gifts, I saw a family of six siblings gather around a little pail and start sharing whatever was inside. The eldest, a 12-year-old girl or so, took out an orange and shared it with her brothers and sisters. Then the apple. Then the candies. And always, she was the last to take a bite of whatever was left. They had so little, but they shared with each other. I did not get the name of that little girl, but I sure wish she would become the president of the Republic of the Philippines someday. There is another 12-year-old girl who could be president of our country someday: Christina Bugayong. This girl from a poor family returned the P300,000 that she found on a street last Jan. 4. Asked why she did it, she simply said: "*Hindi naman po sa akin yon, e.*" (Because it's not mine).

* * *

Inviting you to a psycho-spiritual retreat for healing of relationships to be given by Fr. Ed Fugoso, SVD, Jan. 14-15 (Tagaytay) and Jan. 28-29 (Cebu). This retreat will be held thereafter every second and fourth weekend of the month. For inquiries, please call 0917-5414330 and 0920-9500345.

* * *

A moment with the Lord:

Lord, lead me and help me to stay on the road of humility, honesty and obedience. Amen.

Justice Cecilia Munoz-Palma, devoted wife

REVEILLE

Ramon J. Farolan

DURING THE PAST FEW DAYS, MUCH HAS been written about former Supreme Court Justice Cecilia Munoz-Palma who passed away last Monday. I do not claim closeness to the late Justice Palma, but let me try to add a few notes on the life of such a distinguished lady.

It was President Manuel Roxas who appointed her the first female prosecutor after the country regained its independence in 1946. Later, on recommendation of Justice Secretary Pedro Tuazon, President Ramon Magsaysay opened, for the first time, the doors of the judiciary to women by naming her judge of the Court of First Instance of Negros Oriental. President Ferdinand Marcos, upon the recommendation of Justice Secretary Claudio Teehankee, appointed her to the Court of Appeals in 1968. In 1973, on the recommendation of Justice Secretary Vicente Abad Santos, Marcos designated her justice of the Supreme Court, breaking 72 years of exclusively male membership in the highest tribunal of the land. Two years later, on September 19, 1975, on the occasion of Law Day, the man who recommended her promotion to the Supreme Court would call her "*ingrata*," after she openly advocated a return to the rule of law; in effect, publicly questioning the acts of the martial law administration. Her speech would merit a five-minute standing ovation from the audience.

Ingrata is the Spanish word for ungrateful. It is a close relative to the Filipino term "*walang utang na loob*." Both refer to the idea that a person accorded honors or appointed to high position is presumed to be forever indebted to the giver and is expected to stand by him during times of crisis; or at the very least, to keep quiet and refrain from any public criticism. In our culture and society, only a few would dare go against this unwritten code of behavior. Justice Palma would accept the word *ingrata* as a badge of honor. By her example, she demonstrated that the virtue of "*utang na loob*" has its limits—limits defined by love of country and the greater interests of our nation.

In her book "The Mirror of My Soul," she tells her readers that: "My oath of office is an oath of loyalty to the Constitution, to justice, and the people and is not an oath of fealty to the appointing power." This reminds me so much of my own father's counsel regarding public officials. He said: "As public officials, we do not serve individuals. We serve our country and our people." In the days ahead, we ought to keep these thoughts in mind.

* * *

I did not get to know Justice Palma until much later when she had already left government service. I was introduced to her under unusual circumstances.

In January 1997, I was admitted to St. Luke's Medical Center for triple bypass surgery. After recovery, I underwent a cardiac rehabilitation program which involved an hour of supervised workouts three times a week. We were 15 new members of the exclusive "zipper" club. (The stitches on our chests remind one of the zipper on a jacket.) Some members of the club were Butz Aquino, Renato Constantino Jr., and Dan De Padua.

The oldest in our group was Dean Rodolfo Palma of the UE College of Law. At age 86, his doctors felt that the good dean was too old for a bypass operation and so he was advised to take up the rehabilitation program aside from continuing medication. While we were both in the cardiac care unit, his wife, Supreme Court Justice Cecilia Munoz-Palma, was rushed to St. Luke's after a severe asthma attack. In fact, her heart had stopped beating when she got to the hospital and the medical people had to revive her.

Dean Palma was a Bataan veteran who had fought during the war as a first lieutenant, and later, as a captain in the 1st Regular Division. He would participate in the Death March and spend some four months in the Capas concentration camp.

A few weeks into our rehab program, a distraught Dean Palma told me that burglars had broken into their Quezon City residence. For some reason, the only items taken were his World War II medals: the Silver Star and the Bronze Medal from the US government; and the Gold Cross and Military Merit Medal from the Philippine government. He invited me to his home and, for the first time, I met Justice Palma who graciously showed me around a room full of awards and decorations.

A few days after informing the Armed Forces of the Philippines of the burglary, then AFP chief of staff Gen. Arnulfo Acedera invited Justice Palma and Dean Palma to his office at GHQ. I accompanied the Palmas to Camp Aguinaldo where General Acedera presented Dean Palma with a new set of medals at a simple luncheon tendered in their honor.

I also made representations with the US Embassy for possible replacements of the US medals. After a few weeks, we were invited to the offices of Amb. Thomas Hubbard where Dean Palma received the replacements of the medals he had lost. Justice Palma then invited us for lunch at the Manila Hotel. A few days later, I received a handwritten note from her "expressing our most sincere gratitude" for the efforts made on their behalf and for making representations concerning Dean Palma's heroic acts during World War II.

Months after Dean Palma passed away, I received a phone call from Justice Palma informing me that she had come from visiting Capas, Tarlac. There was a monument honoring and naming the veterans of the Death March as well as the concentration camp, and she could not find the name of her beloved "Rodong." In death, as in life, she was concerned about his place in history.

Testing the limits of the law

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

THE "SCANDAL" INVOLVING MARIE ROXANNE "Plinky" Recto and her estranged lover, lawyer Magdaleno Pena, has been splashed all over the media—from the news pages and newscasts to show-biz talk shows—and one would think nothing could surprise the public anymore about this running story.

After all, Recto and Pena have traded accusations of cruelty and instability and thrown mud and sleaze at each other since Recto first went public with her story.

But the latest development in the case is still worth commenting on, as it puts to test a new law that has been touted as a powerful tool for the protection of women and children and the promotion of their rights. The Anti-Violence against Women and their Children Act of 2004 (RA 9262) is meant to address the most serious aspects of violence against women, particularly domestic violence and partner-battering. By its very title, the new law provides protection for women and their children—only—and yet the latest wrinkle in the Recto-Pena case would seem to mock the very nature of this law.

Recently, Recto went to the media decrying the "kidnapping" of her 15-month-old son by Pena. The boy was taken from his caregivers in Recto's condominium unit in Mandaluyong, by the sheriff of Bago City (in Negros Occidental) who was accompanied by police from the Pasig CIDG.

The sheriff and police were armed with a "temporary protection order" (TPO) issued by Bago RTC Judge Henry Trocino, who also ordered Recto to put up a bond of P1 million, and who specified that the Pasig CIDG effect Pena's "custody" of the boy.

Rowena "Bing" Guanzon, Recto's lawyer, says she has already filed an administrative case against Judge Trocino with the Supreme Court and, alleging bias on the judge's part, she will also file tomorrow a motion to inhibit Judge Trocino from further hearing the case.

* * *

"*WALANG judge na matino ang gagawa nito* (No judge in his right mind would do this)," Guanzon said in a phone interview.

The TPO is one of the more innovative and important features of RA 9262. The TPO and the barangay protection order (BPO) were included in the law providing protection to women and their children, even as they pursue charges against the alleged batterer or perpetrator. A primer on the new law, written by Guanzon, states that the protection orders are meant to "safeguard the victim from further harm, minimizing any disruption in her daily life, to help her to independently regain control over her life."

A court can issue a TPO, which is effective for 30 days pending the issuance of a permanent protection order (PPO), based on a petition citing any of the punishable acts of physical, psychological, emotional or sexual violence and economic abuse enumerated in the law.

Under a TPO, the judge can order the accused to, among other things: stay away from the woman and/or her child or any family or household member specified in the order, and from specific places such as the woman's workplace, club, church or the children's school; give the custody of minor children to the woman; give support to the wife and minor children; leave the marital abode regardless of who owns it; and file a bond to "keep the peace."

* * *

A LOT of people, especially men, may question the coverage of the law since it provides protection only to women and children. But while the law is in effect, it's the responsibility of everyone, especially officers of the court like a judge, to follow and implement the spirit and letter of the law.

Which is why I think Judge Trocino's TPO is fundamentally flawed since it seeks to provide the protection of the law to someone who is not entitled to it, at least not under RA 9262. Guanzon says that "a judge cannot lawfully issue a TPO in favor of a man, because only women and their children are protected by (the law)."

Even if Pena had alleged that his boy was being abused by Recto, says Guanzon, "the TPO is still not the proper remedy." Indeed, in an ongoing procedure, the RTC of Mandaluyong has already issued a TPO in favor of Recto, though a petition for an extension of the TPO was pending when Pena filed his own motion for custody in Bago City. "No two TPOs can be issued to the same parties," Guanzon told reporters.

* * *

THE DISPUTE between Recto and Pena may have hit the headlines mainly because of Recto's work in entertainment and her being the sister of a senator.

But it's also become a matter of public interest, especially for women, because of the way the case is testing the limits as well as the practicability and relevance of the Anti-Violence against Women and their Children Act. Could such a law, considered in these parts as a major breakthrough for women's rights, really bring an end to a major epidemic of violence directed at women and children?

This is not just rhetoric, because the law has an impact on so many Filipinos. The findings of a survey conducted by the Social Weather Stations show that two million women over 18 years old have reported experiencing physical harm once or several times in their lives, the majority of them at the hands of husbands, partners and boyfriends. Domestic violence is the most prevalent form of gender-based violence in this country, followed by rape. The SWS survey also shows that more men admitted to having abused their wives or girlfriends.

As happens so often in this country, there is a very real possibility that this law could instead end up being twisted and corrupted so that it would be used instead to punish the very people whom it was meant to protect. If that should come to pass, then we might as well throw all our laws into a paper shredder, for they would not be worth much more than mulch.

Pure risk and open-ended play

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

TODAY I TURN 60. I BOW TO TIME, TO ITS effects, to its chanciness, and its promise of change. With knowing smiles, my older friends welcome me to the land of senior citizens, where movies, meals and medicines cost less. But, I tell them: I rarely go to the movies, I mostly eat at home, and, so far, I have no need for the blessings of discounted medicines.

Still, I look back upon the years that have gone by and realize that I may have spent too much time calculating risk and substituting work for play. This occurred to me after I left a very public career on television. In the last five years, I've been trying to recover what I think I have lost: the joy of pure risk and the timelessness of open-ended play. I have learned most from Julia, my 5-year-old granddaughter.

At the breakfast table, perched on her high chair, Julia pushes her knees against the table's edge until the chair totters on its hind legs, as if suspended in the wind, and the slightest breeze can tilt it either way. Forward, she could slam her body against the table, her little hands pinned against the edge. Backward, she could fall and break her head against the concrete floor. She does this every morning, an immanent ritual of sheer risk-taking, like a toy unwinding itself. I, of course, constantly warn her of what could happen if she loses her balance. She looks at me with great sympathy, and says she is sorry. But if she could defend herself, perhaps she would point to my Ducati, and ask why.

I began riding motorcycles when I was 18, abruptly stopping only when, one day, my mother sold my bike as scrap. I went back to motorcycling when I started to earn my own money, conscientiously giving it up when my children were growing up. I started riding again in 2001, a few months after my mother died. I sold my car and bought a Ducati S4, a high-performance bike with the legendary 916cc racing engine. This is an exquisitely crafted Italian bike, what they call in Europe a café racer. For the kind of roads we have, it is really not the most practical bike to have. But I love it and I have kept it. A few months ago, in anticipation of my graduation to senior citizenship, I decided to give myself an advance birthday gift—an Aprilia Caponord, a dual-purpose giant trailie with a 1000cc racing engine. Unlike the Ducati, which requires the rider to slightly arch his body like a jockey, the Caponord allows its owner to ride upright, like an armored knight on a steed.

On any Sunday, I pack my binoculars and a change of clothes into my tank bag, and soar like a rocket into the breaking dawn. I mostly ride alone. I like to stop and watch egrets feed on the open fields. I don't enjoy having to keep pace with younger and faster riders, preferring to let myself go as fast as I can when the thought strikes me. These machines were built for speed, and I want to know how much speed I can call upon when the need arises. Yet I am a careful rider.

Too careful perhaps to be able to ride smoothly like Valentino Rossi. You need to bridge the discontinuity between man and machine, so that your pulse and the engine's vibration merge into one continuous purr. There are times when I sense a light stab of anxiety on my chest as I mount my bike. What if I fall this time? Is my back fully protected? There have been times when I have actually dismounted, taken off my helmet and jacket, and waited till the anxiety subsided.

At a certain age, one cannot be too rational about risk and play. There is no practical gain from riding motorcycles, unless you ride to work or you sell bikes. You could hurt yourself, you could end up breaking your spine and being immobilized all your life, or you could die. If you start calculating the risks against the gain—you would not ride at all. To ride a motorcycle is to accept randomness and chance. Amor fati: it is to love your fate. And, while it has many beginnings, the play has no definable end. It has no purpose, no object, other than the motion of riding itself.

That's exactly how my granddaughter is at play. She goes in and out of her games; she builds and dismantles, and ceaselessly rearranges. She spreads out her toys and packs them up the next moment. That's when she's happiest—when she decides her own beginnings and her own ends. "A child is innocence and forgetfulness," says the writer Georges Bataille, "a new beginning and game, a wheel turning on itself, a first impulse, the sacred 'yes.'" Nietzsche's Zarathustra asks: "Why should the lion become a child?" Bataille's answer: "The will to power is the lion: but isn't the child the will to chance?"

At a certain point in one's life, except maybe in the case of those who have failed to grow, the will to power gives way to play. One returns to what Nietzsche calls "the ideal of exuberant strength and childlike qualities."

The other day, while Julia was absorbed in play, I told her it was time to pack up her toys and prepare for school. "I'm still playing," she replied. "You'll be late, your school bus will be here soon," I said. "I want to continue playing," she answered back with visible frustration. "Okay, you can have five minutes more," I said trying to sound emphatic. "Lolo," she protested, "I don't like five minutes." Well, she has to accept the constraints of time as she grows up, just as she has to learn to give up play for school and work. That's what living is about.

But it is strange: we spend our lives mastering time, avoiding risk, and giving up play. Then, when we are done, we spend the remaining years wondering where time went, why our lives seem empty, and why we cannot find joy in our leisure time. The lion has to learn how to become a child.

Comments to public.lives@gmail.com

Lolo Carmel

REBEL WITHOUT A CLUE

Patricia Evangelista

BEFORE I WENT TO LIVE ON MY OWN, I SPENT A COUPLE of months with my aunt and grandfather. I moved into their Carmel II subdivision house, lugging man-sized luggage, a pile of romance novels, and my dusty teddy bear Alex.

One day Alex disappeared. It was only during lunch—when I saw my grandfather laughing at something on the back lawn—that I found out where Alex was. My graying teddy was, through the glass doors, in full view, painfully white after a trip to the washer and hanging pathetically from the clothesline by his ears.

My Lolo Diadoro—to me he was just Lolo—was a Tondo boy who did good. He made his way up the San Miguel corporate ladder while married to my gloriously beautiful grandmother, his "Ling." Ling was how they called each other, when they ate, when they laughed, when they bickered or when Lola scolded Lolo for being too honest to customs officials. It was only when my grandmother died that I found out what Ling meant. Ling—his darling—was the love of his life.

After Lola passed away, an uncle would drive my Lolo every day to the crypt where Lola's ashes were kept. Lolo would make his way slowly down the stairs to stand before the brightly polished metal plate engraved with my grandmother's name. He would whisper to my grandmother, pat the metal plate, and meet my uncle up the stairs. Then they would go off to Chowking.

My father was the youngest boy in Lolo's brood of four. Officially, I'm the youngest grandchild. Unofficially, I'm the brat of the family.

When I was five or six, during one of the family lunches, I started pulling at my Dad's sleeve asking for McDonald's ice cream. Not just any ice cream, not the ube ice cream in Lola's freezer. I wanted a Sundae, mounded with hot fudge, from the takeaway window. My Dad said no. I pouted, forced out a couple of tears, but dear old Dad was insensitive to my desperate plight.

It was when I kissed Lolo goodbye that he took me aside and pressed four P10-bills into my sweaty little palm. Then he went to my Dad and told him to buy the kid ice cream. My Dad looked at me (I was still clutching Lolo's hand) and then looked at my grandfather standing beside me. Dad gave in. It was then that my grandfather was elevated from the nice old grandpa to Superman.

During the two months I lived with him, I'd tell him "I love you," once, twice a day. I couldn't help it, because he never said "I love you, too."

"I love you, Lolo," I'd say over breakfast.

"Thank you," he'd say politely. Then he'd go on cutting into his pancakes.

It was always "I love you, Lolo," and that polite little "Thank you." It was a game already, I kept trying to catch him, and he kept weaseling out. See, my grandfather was a gentleman—I just think he carried things a little too far.

There's this movie titled "The Princess Bride." It's been my favorite since the first time I watched it as a kid. The heroine is Buttercup, the most beautiful girl in the world. Buttercup lives in a farm with her parents and Wesley, the farm boy. Buttercup's chief thrill in life is ordering Wesley about. "Farmboy, draw me a bath," she would say. "Farmboy, saddle my horse." To each request Wesley has one answer: "As you wish." Finally, Buttercup fell in love with Wesley.

"Farmboy, do you love me?" she asks.

Wesley smiles. "Every time you think I'm saying 'As you wish,'" he said, "I'm actually saying 'I love you.' You just didn't hear me."

On New Year's Eve, barely a week ago, the whole family gathered in his living room—from my uncles all the way down to my sister's baby Isabela. We laughed and chattered and gossiped, drank wine and dug into dinner. My grandfather was quiet, as always. He's one of the people who can happily fade into the background, and make his presence known only when people ask. During a lull in conversation, I snuck at look at him. His white hair was combed back perfectly, his black leather belt matched black leather shoes, and his grey pants were uniformly creased. It was the look on his face that I will never forget. He was staring around him with an enormous grin, smiling almost smugly, as if saying, "This is my family."

The next day, he was rushed to the hospital.

I stood beside his hospital bed the day before he died. His collarbones were like blades, so sharp I thought they must have been cutting into his skin. I knew he was my Lolo, they said he was my Lolo, but I couldn't associate the man struggling to breathe with my bright-eyed, smiling grandfather.

My aunt tapped him on the shoulder, and he opened his eyes. "Tricia's here," my aunt said. "She came from school." My grandfather smiled that old, old smile and patted my hand. "Hi Tricia," he whispered. He was my Lolo again.

"I love you," I told him. For the first time, there was no thank you. He had already fallen asleep.

Some men are born to greatness. Their names are remembered in history books, their deeds told and retold to a rapt audience, and songs are dedicated to their memory. They burst into life with the speed of a shooting star. They are the heroes, the mavericks, the rebels and the dreamers.

When people die, you spend the next few days remembering everything they said, and their every little gesture suddenly contains a world of meanings. I like to think he meant "I love you" when he said "Thank you." Maybe, I wasn't listening hard enough. Knowing Lolo, it was just his way.

My grandfather was one of the regular guys. He was a good man, a family man, but men like him have no place in the pages of history. He wasn't a maverick or a rebel. No songs will be written about him, and the only stories that will be told about him are those that we'll retell over family dinners. But to us, his family, the stars are a thousand times dimmer, and the days lonelier at the thought of a voice now stilled. The old men who filled the church pews called him a good friend. They came last night, white-haired, frail, clutching canes and peering through thick glasses.

When I go to my aunt's house again, the chair by the telephone will be empty. The gentle eyes that looked at us once with such pride are now closed, and the strong hands that swung grandchildren up into the air no more. I like to think he's up there now, wandering among the stars holding his 'Ling's hand.

I'd like to tell him I love him, in a way I've only just understood.

"Thank you."

Send comments to pat.evangelista@gmail.com

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TALK of the TOWN

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Editor Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.

Judges under the gun

THE MURDER OF JUDGE HENRICK GINGOYON OF THE PASAY CITY REGIONAL Trial Court on Dec. 31, 2005 highlights the perilous work of lawyers, especially those who defend victims of human rights violations. Gingoyon is the 10th judge to be killed in the country over the past six years.

Besides Gingoyon, seven lawyers were killed in 2005. The previous year, three judges and three lawyers were murdered.

Since President Macapagal-Arroyo came to power in 2001, 11 lawyers have been killed, according to Counsels for the Defense of Liberties.

The Supreme Court notes that nearly all of the country's magistrates handling drug cases and heinous crimes have received death threats.

Even Supreme Court justices have not been spared the threats. Acid was thrown at the car of then Justice Artemio Panganiban on two occasions, and a black funeral wreath was delivered at the home of Justice Romeo Callejo Sr.

The murders and death threats clearly show the breakdown of law and order in the country.

No wonder, international lawyers' groups have declared the Philippines one of the world's most dangerous places for members of the legal profession.

They personify rule of law, embody its majesty

By Ismael G. Khan Jr.

THE MURDER OF JUDGE Henrick Gingoyon of the Pasay Regional Trial Court on that chilly morning before the advent of the New Year should serve as a hot-button reminder to our law enforcement authorities that they have yet to come up with a credible solution to the murders of nine other judges in the last six years alone.

Clearly, the number of fatalities is unacceptable to the members of the bench who are sworn to champion the rule of law and even-handed administration of justice. This prompted newly appointed Chief Justice Artemio V. Panganiban to prod the police to redouble their efforts in solving these crimes so that the perpetrators of what amounts to the commission of an injustice against our judges do not get away with it.

He said, "when injustice is committed against judges, it's very important that justice be given to them. Otherwise, how can the judges be expected to give justice to the people if justice to them is not attended to?"

Apprehension

In fact, around three years ago, the Supreme Court had expressed its undue apprehension over the apparent inability of both the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) to provide adequate security and protection to the nation's judges following the killing of Tayug RTC Judge Oscar Uson.

His car was peppered with bullets as it crossed a short bridge in Asingan, Pangasinan on Sept. 27, 2002. An emergency meeting was convened by then Acting Chief Justice Josue N. Bellosillo with NBI and PNP top brass who vowed to keep the nation's 2,214 magistrates safe and secure. They also promised to solve three cases involving the killing of Eastern Samar RTC Judge Celso Lorenzo, Ilocos Norte RTC Judge Ariston Rubio, and Compostella Valley RTC Judge Eugenio Valles.

It's probably a cruel indictment of our law enforcement capability to note that these crimes remain among the "cold cases" in the PNP and NBI morgues. "Coldest" among them, sad to say, is the brazen murder of Judge Isaac S. Puno of the Manila Court of First Instance in the late '70s. Judge Puno was an elder brother of Senior Associate Justice Reynato S. Puno.

Threats for breakfast

Former Quezon City RTC Judge Miriam Defensor-Santiago claimed that she ate death threats for breakfast. That bit of hyperbole does emphasize the fact that death threats and physical intimidation come with the territory. Nearly all of the country's magistrates handling drug cases and heinous crimes have at one time or another been the recipients of such morbid reminders of their vulnerability to murder and mayhem.

Incumbent justices of the Supreme Court have not been spared these threats. Then Associate Justice Panganiban had been so "reminded" when deadly acid was thrown at his car on two different occasions by parties who remain unknown and at large to this day. Not more than two years ago, a black funeral wreath with the word "condolences" was delivered at the front doorsteps of Justice Romeo J. Callejo, Sr.'s house in Quezon City shortly after he had penned the Court's decision on the Kuratong-Baleleng case.

It certainly behooves the government to do its best to put these judicial terrorists behind bars before the country earns yet another invective epithet as "the most murderous place for jurists" in addition to being the "most murderous place for journalists."

Interestingly, both jurists and journalists are natural allies in their quest for truth, and the Court considers the Fourth Estate as the Sixth Pillar in administering the criminal justice system. For starters, the PNP and the NBI could be less reactive and, instead, be more proactive in securing the persons and families of threatened members of the judiciary.

Straight arrows

Two officials of the Supreme Court—Deputy Court Administrator Christopher Lock and Assistant Court Administrator Reuben de la Cruz—can assist them effectively in this effort. Their expertise and experiences as former NBI agents and trial judges can be tapped to improve the intelligence and investigative capabilities of our law enforcement agencies.

Not only can they shoot straight but, even more importantly, their reputation as straight arrows can provide the built-in credibility and quality necessary for any judicial security program to succeed beyond merely allowing judges to carry firearms in going about their tasks, or permitting them to utilize the services of court staff to double as bodyguards.

An amendment to the Revised Penal Code for the imposition of capital punishment on the killing of a judge who was performing his duties could be an effective deterrent.

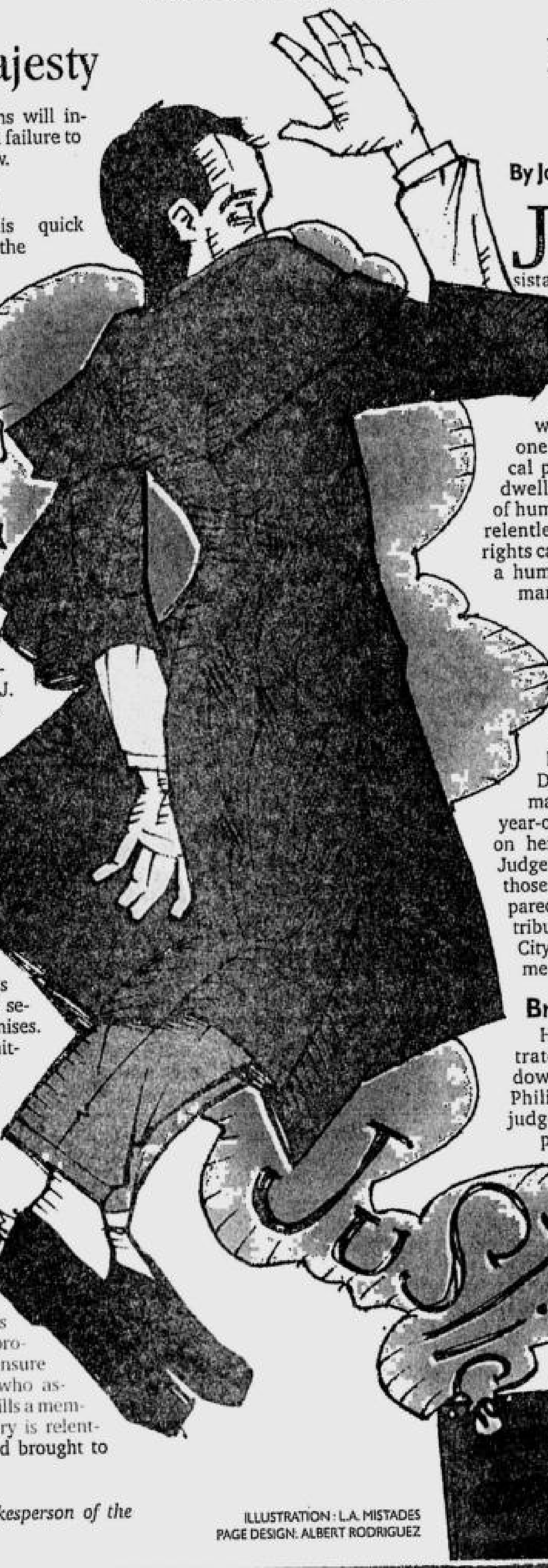
In any event, Chief Justice Panganiban fully realizes the chilling effect on the administration of justice, which the murder of a sitting judge would engender should its perpetrator escape with impunity. The erosion of the foundations of our social institutions will inevitably result from a failure to uphold the rule of law.

Judicial security

Consequently, his quick moves to reinforce the safety and security of the men and women guarding the ramparts of the judicial establishment could not have come any sooner. A reorganized Committee on Judicial Security has been reinforced and strengthened with the appointment of Justice Cancio C. Garcia as its chair, with Court Administrator Presbitero J. Velasco as vice chair.

It is tasked with devising effective ways and means to address the personal security of all justices and judges in all 13 judicial regions, as well as ensure the security of court premises. One of the committee's immediate projects is to follow through a proposal by Justice Antonio T. Carpio for the organization of a US marshals-type security unit. Aside from providing threatened justices and judges with security, the proposed unit will ensure that any person who assaults, injures or kills a member of the judiciary is relentlessly pursued and brought to justice.

(Khan is the spokesperson of the Supreme Court.)



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Human rights lawyers more vulnerable

By Jose Manuel I. Diokno

JUDGE HENRICK GINGOYON is remembered by the Free Legal Assistance Group (FLAG) for his contributions to the cause of human rights. As a FLAG lawyer based in Cebu, he pursued the defense of those who could not find anyone to defend them: political prisoners, workers, slum dwellers, farmers and victims of human rights violations. His relentless defense of human rights cases distinguished him as a human rights lawyer and a man of conviction.

As a FLAG lawyer, he received death threats and was placed under surveillance. On Aug. 28, 1987, at the height of a coup, Judge Gingoyon's home was illegally raided by the military. During the raid, soldiers manhandled his then 10-year-old daughter by stepping on her stomach. A year later, Judge Gingoyon was among those named in a death list prepared by the military and distributed to vigilantes in Toledo City, which called for his immediate execution.

Breakdown

His brutal murder illustrates the complete breakdown of law and order in the Philippines. The killing of any judge is an attack on the independence and integrity of the judiciary. It jeopardizes the conditions under which justice may be dispensed.

The modus operandi of Judge Gingoyon's killer is reminiscent of the murders of other FLAG lawyers: the use of armed assailants on motorcycles and the shooting of lawyers at or near their homes when they are most vulnerable.

From 1984 to 2005, 10 FLAG lawyers were murdered.

- Zorro C. Aguilar was shot to death on Sept. 23, 1984 in Dipolog City allegedly on the orders of a military intelligence officer.
- Romraflo R. Taojo was shot to death on April 2, 1985 at his home in Tagum, Davao del Norte by unidentified men believed to belong to a paramilitary unit under orders from the military.
- Crisostomo Cailing was shot to death on July 6, 1985, at his home in Balingasag, Misamis Occidental by unidentified persons.
- Luisito Villanueva was shot to death on Feb. 21, 1986 at Calacan, Calamba, Misamis Occidental.
- Vicente Mirabueno was shot to death on Feb. 6, 1988, at the public market in General Santos City by unidentified persons.
- Alfonso Surigao, Jr. was shot to death on June 24, 1988, at his home in Cebu City by a vigilante acting on orders of a military intelligence officer.
- Oscar Tonog was shot in the presence of his wife on March 21, 1989 near his home in Catarman, Northern Samar. He died on March 22, 1989.
- Provincial Fiscal Gil Getes was shot to death at his home on March 4, 1990. It is believed he was murdered because he successfully prosecuted some members of the Citizens Armed Forces Geographical Unit.
- Judge Eugenio Valles was shot to death on April 25, 2002 by an unidentified assailant while jogging on the highway in Nabunturan, Compostela Valley.
- Judge Henrick Gingoyon is the 10th FLAG lawyer murdered since 1984.

Scot-free

Of the FLAG lawyers murdered since 1984, the perpetrator of only one has been criminally prosecuted and was subsequently sentenced to life imprisonment. The killers—and those who ordered the killings—of the other FLAG lawyers are still at large, scot-free.

Lawyers who handle human rights cases are more vulnerable to violence from military, paramilitary, police and other rightist forces, who do not recognize the role of human rights lawyers as defenders of the Constitution and the rule of law.

As FLAG mourns Judge Gingoyon's death, FLAG demands a speedy, impartial and full investigation of his murder to bring the perpetrators before the bar of justice and hold them to account for their crime.

(Diokno is the chair of FLAG.)

LIST OF SLAIN JUDGES

(Nov. 1, 1999 to Dec. 31, 2005)

1. **Henrick F. Gingoyon**, of Pasay City Regional Trial Court (RTC), Branch 117, was fatally shot by two motorcycle-riding gunmen at 12:45 a.m. near his residence in Soldier's Hills Village, Barangay Molino, in Bacoor, Cavite on Dec. 31, 2005.
2. **Milnar T. Lammawin**, of RTC Branch 25 in Tabuk, Kalinga, died of nine gunshot wounds after he was shot by two unidentified men in front of a bakeshop in Tabuk on Aug. 9, 2004.
3. **Voltaire Y. Rosales**, of RTC Branch 83 in Tanauan City, Batangas, was fatally ambushed on June 10, 2004.
4. **Paterno G. Tiamson**, of RTC Branch 69 in Binangonan, Rizal, died as a result of stab wounds on Feb. 21, 2004.
5. **Pinera A. Biden**, of the Municipal Circuit Trial Court of Kabugao, Apayao, died of gunshot wounds on May 17, 2003.
6. **Oscar Gaby M. Uson**, of RTC Branch 52 in Tayug, Pangasinan, was gunned down by assailants on Sept. 27, 2002.
7. **Eugenio R. Valles**, of RTC, Branch 3, Nabunturan, Campostella Valley, died due to multiple gunshot wounds on April 25, 2002.
8. **Ariston L. Rubio**, of RTC Branch 17 in Batac, Ilocos Norte, died as a result of multiple gunshot wounds on Oct. 31, 2001.
9. **Hassan T. Ibnohaijil**, of RTC Branch 45, San Jose, Occidental Mindoro, died as a result of a fatal head injury he suffered from his assailants on Feb. 5, 2001.
10. **Celso F. Lorenzo, Sr.**, of RTC Branch 1 in Borongan, Eastern Samar, died of gunshot wounds on Nov. 1, 1999.

SOURCE: THE OFFICE OF THE COURT ADMINISTRATOR. UPDATED BY THE SUPREME COURT-PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE.

Attacks constitute a threat to civil liberties

By Neri Javier Colmenares

MEMBERS OF THE LEGAL profession, like journalists and activists, must not be attacked for the practice of their profession or political beliefs. The attacks on lawyers and judges are attacks against the legal profession and civil liberties.

Fifteen violent attacks against lawyers were recorded by Counsels for the Defense of Liberties (Codal) in 2005. Other than Judge Henrick Gingoyon, seven lawyers many of whom were human rights lawyers, were killed in 2005: Felidito Dacut (Leyte), Norman Bocar (Samar), Ambrosio Matias and his son Leonard (Nueva Ecija), Public Attorney's Office (PAO) lawyer Teresita Vidamo (Las Piñas), Victor Padilla (Manila) and Reuel Dalguntas (Davao).

Human rights lawyer Charles Juloya was seriously wounded in an assassination attempt in March 2005. Romeo Capulong, head of the Lawyer-Presentors of the Peoples Congress on Truth and Accountability, was also the subject of an assassination attempt in Nueva Ecija.

PAO lawyer Armando Cabalida was ambushed in February 2005 resulting in the death of his driver. In 2004, three judges were brutally killed and four lawyers were shot dead.

Codal has recorded 11 lawyers, mostly public interest and human rights practitioners, killed since President Macapagal-Arroyo came to power in 2001. The killing of human rights lawyer Juvy Magsino in February 2004 by suspected elements of the Armed Forces of the Philippines remains unresolved until now.

Codal reiterates its demand for Ms Arroyo to move swiftly and decisively to investigate and prosecute the perpetrators of these acts. The President has yet to act on the manifesto on the killing of lawyers submitted by Codal in August 2005 urging her to publicly condemn the killing and harassment of members of the legal profession.

Manifesto

Codal circulated a manifesto signed by hundreds of lawyers, including provincial chapters of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) and international lawyers groups.

The International Association of Peoples' Lawyers and the International Association of Democratic Lawyers condemned the killings and declared the Philippines one of the most dangerous places for lawyers in the world.

The attacks undermine the practice of law and the ability of lawyers to fulfill their sworn obligation to serve their clients to the fullest. The capacity of the legal profession to uphold Canons 2, 18 and 19 of the Code of Professional Responsibility is diminished when its members face threats and are paralyzed into playing passive roles instead of vigorously serving their clients.

These Canons require lawyers to represent their client "in an efficient manner compatible with independence, integrity and effectiveness of the profession" (Canon 2) and "with competence and diligence" (Canons 18 and 19).

Judges are expected to promulgate their decision without fear or favor based on their evaluation of the evidence presented. Their decisions should not be influenced by the consideration of the capacity of one of the parties to physically eliminate them.

Vigilance

The recent attacks, however, threaten the independence and integrity of judges, making the effective administration of justice even more difficult. Canon 1 (Rule 1.03) of the Code of Judicial Conduct requires that a judge be vigilant against any attempt to subvert the independence of the judiciary and resist any pressure from whatever source.

Paragraph 18 of the Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers, adopted by the Eight United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders (1990), says "lawyers shall not be identified with their clients or their client's causes as a result of the discharge of their functions."

Any attack on lawyers and judges constitute a threat to legal profession and civil liberties including the constitutional principle that grants everyone access to courts and the right to counsel.

(Colmenares is the spokesperson of Counsels for the Defense of Liberties, an organization of judges, lawyers, law students and paralegals.)

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Daughter of murdered publisher decries slow pace of justice

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—THE daughter of slain publisher Philip Agustin has appealed for swift justice, saying the Department of Justice has still not issued a resolution in its preliminary investigation of her father's murder in Dingalan, Aurora on May 10 last year.

"*Ang bagal. Inabot na ng pitong buwan* (It's been slow. It has taken seven months now)," Rosebelle Cruz said by phone on Friday as she decried that no one, including the alleged mastermind Mayor Jaime Ylarde, has been charged.

Ylarde, a former policeman, had strongly denied a hand in Agustin's slaying.

The DOJ prosecutor assigned to the case, Senior State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco,. was not in his office when the INQUIRER called on Friday. His secretary, Lina Vergara, confirmed that no resolution has been issued yet.

Told that a resolution was expected since the 60-day period for conducting a preliminary investigation had long been over, Vergara said Velasco has been "handling many cases."

"[Velasco has] been studying well Agustin's case. He did not want to rush it to avoid committing a mistake," Vergara said.

Cruz said Velasco had held at least eight hearings, the last one on Aug. 2.

Agustin was one of the more than 70 Filipino journalists killed since democracy was restored in the Philippines in 1986, the National Union of Journalists in the Philippines said. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Vice gov says graft ate ₱176M in quarry taxes

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—THE Pampanga provincial government reported collecting P40 million in revenues from sand quarrying in 2005, the highest by the provincial capitol since 1993.

But Vice Gov. Joseller Guiao estimated that about P176 million might have been lost to irregularities.

Provincial administrator Fidel Arcenas, also the executive officer of the provincial quarry task force, on Saturday denied irregularities in the collection and challenged Guiao to "prove his figures."

Citing information from quarry operators and traders, Guiao said at least 2,000 truckloads of sand are hauled out of Pampanga daily.

At a tax of P300 per truck, he said the collection should amount to P600,000 a day or P18 million a month. The total collection for the year should have reached P216 million, he said.

The collection, according to Guiao, should be higher because the P21-billion Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway Project, started in 2005, has increased the demand for sand as filling material for the 94-km highway.

The Bases Conversion Development Authority said the project needed five million cubic meters of filling materials.

The P40-million collection, Guiao said, was only a third of the P120-million annual average income from 1999 to 2001 when the Natural Resources Development Corp. collected the fees. The NRDC is the corporate arm of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

He said the increase came only after two congressional committees investigated the drastic drop in the provincial government's quarry tax collections and flaws in the collection system.

Arcenas said the improved collection was the result of Gov. Mark Lapid's efforts to "streamline the collection system."

He said Lapid's executive order in February last year "provided for safeguards and proper monitoring of trucks."

Guiao said those supposed mechanisms were not actually in place in the field. "What mechanisms? No reforms were done," he said.

He said the practices of incomplete entries in official receipts, proliferation of fake receipts, payments at checkpoints and not at the treasurer's office, assignment of non-bonded personnel in checkpoints, remittances of collections by unauthorized personnel and the lack of an independent monitoring team continue.

Arcenas said some personnel may have connived with traders but these incidents were not as rampant as before.

He said the 2005 collection—the highest after the P24.2 million collected in 2002—vindicated the provincial government from doubts it could not meet or surpass NRDC's remittances to Pampanga.

Citing records certified by provincial accountant Benjamin Yuzon, Arcenas said the NRDC gave the province a share of only P30.5 million from 1999 to 2001. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

RESIDENTS of Poro Point, La Union gather around a giant sea turtle as it is being released back to the sea. AP

'Pawikan' finds safe haven in Tayabas Bay

LUCENA CITY—TAYABAS BAY IS now a safe refuge for endangered marine turtles, thanks partly to media reports, officials of the national environmental watchdog Tanggol Kalikasan said here yesterday.

Since the group's launching of "Save the Endangered Species Campaign" in 2003, more than a hundred endangered marine sea turtles commonly called here as "pawikan" have been released in Tayabas Bay, said Glenn Forbes, TK coastal and marine program officer.

"The figure is only based on the formal reports that we have received. But our information shows the figure could be more than what has been actually reported. Unlike in the past, fishermen now have learned to voluntarily release the turtle as soon as the creature gets entangled in their nets," Forbes said.

He said the fishermen have also realized that the presence of "pawikan" could serve as an indicator that a school of fish abounds.

"Marine turtle is an indicator species. They will go where the fish are," Forbes explained.

"Pawikan" is listed as an endangered species by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources and by the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

The United Nations has declared 2006 the Year of the Turtle in an effort to save the gentle species.

Out of the seven species of marine turtles found worldwide, six are seen in Philippine waters—the green sea, hawksbill, leatherback, olive ridley, sea turtle and loggerhead turtles.

Forbes attributed the high public awareness on the plight of the endangered sea creature to the wide exposure provided by the national and local tri-media practitioners.

Forbes stressed that no amount of information and educational campaign by nongovernment and people's organizations could result to a heightened awareness of the public, especially those from the coastal villages, if there was no help from media. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Highway mishaps' death toll: 43

MALAYBALAY CITY—A total of 43 persons died along the main highway here due to road accidents in 2005, the Traffic Management Center (TMC) reported.

The TMC said from January to December last year, 82 persons were also injured in at least 1,011 vehicular accidents that occurred along the Malaybalay Highway.

Ernie Neri, TMC chief, told the INQUIRER that last year's figures were higher than that recorded in 2004.

Neri said in 2004, the TMC recorded 39 deaths and 40 serious injuries because of the 882 road mishaps along the highway.

Neri said aside from over speeding, other reasons behind the mishaps are drivers' errors.

He said most drivers involved in the accidents were also not familiar with the terrain because they did not come from the city or were not residents of Bukidnon.

"Drivers here are usually cautious when it rains but they ignored drizzles," he said.

He said most of drivers involved in the accidents were also drunken while driving. *Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Investing in Pipelines for the Future

Manila Water

Water interruption in portion of Quezon City needed to upgrade pipelines

Manila Water is currently undertaking a pipe laying program to improve the distribution of water in the East Zone. As part of the program, the upgrade of a large valve along West Avenue corner EDSA will be undertaken and will result in a temporary cutoff of water supply. The interruption will begin 10:00 p.m., Monday, January 9, 2006, up to 6:00 a.m., January 10 and will affect West Ave., Philam Homes, Examiner, Heroes Hill, West Triangle, Sta. Cruz, Nayong Kanluran, and a portion of Paltok.

Manila Water Company advises all residents of the said areas to store enough water prior to the scheduled interruptions to avoid inconvenience.

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(PDI - Jan 8, 2006)

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INQUIRER *Mindanao*

Editor **Jun Bandayrel**
Bureau Chief **Nico A. Alconaba**

'Lumad' banana growers reap success

By Jeffrey M. Tupas
Davao City

FOR THE SMALL community of Tagabawa in the village of Sibulan in Davao City's Toril District, growing bananas is really a sweet endeavor.

Despite the ever-growing perpetual reliance on the use of synthetic chemicals in growing bananas, the *lumad* (indigenous peoples) are tightly clinging to what have been culturally and traditionally acceptable, with the guidance of their elders.

They are doing their thing the organic way, and they claim that they reap sweeter bananas than what mainstream banana plantations grow, primarily because theirs are unlaced with dangerous chemicals. They are also using the native *bongolan* variety of the cavendish.

And while most banana plantations follow the monoculture farming system, the *lumad* refuse to give up other fruit crops. Planted in between rows of bananas are durian, avocado and coconuts.

The Tagabawa believe that they are responsible for their children and the environment, and that applying chemicals on the fields was a contrary practice.

Nature elements

"We believe in the forces and elements that come with nature and the environment. We don't destroy things that are important to us, to our lives," said village official Hernan Ambe, who also acts as the operations manager of the Sibulan Organic Banana Growers Cooperative (Sobagromco).

THE TAGABAWA farmers of Sibulan intercrop their bananas with coconuts, durian and other fruits.

PHOTOS BY JEFFREY M. TUPAS

"We have to be very careful because we don't want to offend nature and destroy the environment. We dread the day [when] we will be blamed by our children and the next generation for the tremendous destruction that could erupt because of our carelessness," Ambe said.

Because of this, the group, backed by Farmcoop, a nongovernment organization established in 1995 with the aim of helping the government implement the agrarian reform law, resorted to becoming all natural.

While banana plantations use dithane, the *lumad* instead use fermented plant juice (FPJ). Dithane is a fungicide that contains mancozeb as active ingredient and labeled by the State of California as cancer-causing.

The concoction comes in a variety. For instance, one is made of *panyawan* or *makabuhay* plant (*Tinospora crispa*) as base element mixed with beer and molasses. The farmers use this blend against fungus and destructive insects.

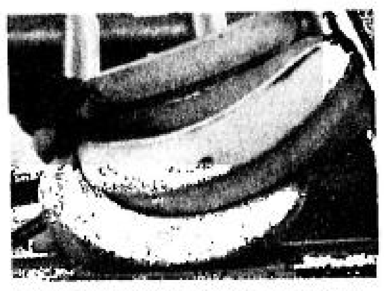
Urea alternative

As a substitute for urea, the farmers use fish amino acids and fermented fruit juices (FFJ). Their organic fertilizer, gathered four months in a compost pit, is made out of farm wastes, including banana trunks and rejected banana fingers, sunflower, cow dung, horse manure and molasses.

Ambe said the natural chemicals they are using are nonpoisonous and are even edible.

Their bananas, even if these are more expensive than those from the mainstream plantations, have become the favorite of Japanese clients and a much-preferred export fruit compared to the products of large-scale plantations, he said.

The Japanese, Ambe said, would get other bananas at $2.50 per box, a far cry from the $3.30 per box of Sobagromco bananas.



THE "BONGOLAN" cavendish produced the natural way are proven to be the favorite of Japanese buyers.

If granted with the organic and fair trade certification, the buying price is expected to reach as high as $5 per box. A box contains 13.5 kilos of bananas.

City recognition

Councilor Ricardo Cabling, chair of the committee on environment and natural resources of the Davao city council, only has good words for the group.

"What is admirable is that the tangible and temporal attractiveness of large-scale agricultural development has failed to lure you," Cabling told the members of the group.

It was learned that representatives of local and transnational agricultural corporations relentlessly courted members of the barangay and the tribal councils, offering thousands of cash and infrastructure projects if the officials allowed them to put up plantations in the area.

But these offers failed to jolt the people, who instead showed that their belief and advocacy to protect the people and the environment against harmful synthetic chemicals are worth fighting for, something that cannot be bought nor be traded with anything.

"What you are doing is very impressive. I thought [the] less-chemical plantation is already better but this one here is a lot better. This shows that organic farming can be done. I hope that you will protect and develop what you have been doing here," the councilor added.

Natural landscape

Leo Avila, another councilor who is also known for his environmental advocacy, noted the natural landscape that the village maintains—something that was less expected in an area with a banaña plantation.

Avila said people had to learn from the experience of the Tagabawa in Sibulan.

"This goes to show that there are better alternatives which need to be promoted and supported," Avila said.

"This is an example of how a community decides together for their future … what you are doing has a long-term benefit. I am so glad of how you do your thing here," he added.

The Tagabawa folk plan to use at least 250 hectares for bananas and have so far planted 70 ha.

They are optimistic that within five years, they would hit their target.

Recently, a small processing plant was built in the area for the farmers to sort, clean and pack their products. All workers of the packing plant are residents of the village.

"This has helped the community. Most of the residents here barely ate three times a day before … but now, life is a lot better for all of us here," Ambe said.

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Nayong Pilipino to remain open

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE NAYONG PILIPINO IN PASAY CITY WILL continue to welcome park goers this year.

The 36-year-old heritage park should have been closed last month to make way for the expansion of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) terminal 3, Charito Planas, executive director of the Nayong Pilipino Foundation (NPF), told the INQUIRER.

"But Naia 3 has not even started operating yet, so the park will continue to entertain park goers for free," she explained.

The heritage park was closed to visitors in June 2002, in preparation for its relocation to its new site near the Aseana and Belle Avenues and Bay Boulevard in the reclamation area.

The proposed relocation, however, was postponed because the Department of Finance has yet to release the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) which would allow the NPF to start construction work.

Pending the approval of the MOA, the park reopened in December 2003 as the "Kapiraso ng Nayong Pilipino," after the 46-hectare property was trimmed down to 37.5 ha.

Planas, however, said that after two years of waiting, she has learned that the MOA has finally reached the Office of the President.

"Hallelujah, it finally started moving," was her reaction.

Planas had said in a previous interview that the NPF was ready to start construction work on the park's new site anytime. "We held a contest for a new concept and we have already chosen the winning entry. The structural plan is ready. We have P500 million from the Manila International Airport Authority (for construction)," she told the INQUIRER.

Planas also announced that the NPF has been invited by developers of the Centennial Expo in Clark, Pampanga, to spruce up four-and-a-half hectares of the 66-ha park. The NPF, however, has yet to decide whether or not to accept the offer.

VENDOR Evangeline Zurbano has been a Black Nazarene devotee since 1961. RAFFY LERMA

Many are called, few are women

By Margaux C. Ortiz

TALES OF THE CITY

IN A SEA OF MALE BLACK NAZARENE DEVOtees, women like Evangeline Zurbano stand out.

On the feast of the Black Nazarene at the Quiapo Church tomorrow, the 61-year-old food vendor will join hundreds of thousands of devotees in reaffirming their faith and giving thanks to God for the blessings they received last year.

"Women devotees like me are few compared to the male devotees of the Black Nazarene," Zurbano, a resident of Sta. Cruz, Manila, told the INQUIRER in an interview.

She said men dominate the day of the feast, fighting for a chance to carry the 200-year-old statue of the cross-bearing Christ.

Zurbano lamented that the thickness of the male-dominated crowd prevent old women like her from joining the procession.

"We could be trampled upon by the feverish devotees if we participate in the activity," she said.

Her decision to refrain from joining the procession, however, does not diminish her devotion to the Black Nazarene.

Zurbano recalled that since she became a devotee in 1961, she has been faithfully attending the Friday masses offered to the cross-bearing Christ.

"I just decided to devote my life to Him, not even having a particular intention for Him to grant," she said.

"I know many street toughies who are devotees," Zurbano added, pointing out that they think of the feast as a way to ask God for forgiveness for all their bad deeds.

"They believe that carrying the Black Nazarene and even touching the ropes of the makeshift stage where the statue stands on would absolve them of their sins somehow," she explained. The food vendor said that since she turned 60 last year, she has been attending Mass every day at the Quiapo Church.

Zurbano said her day begins at 3:30 a.m. when she walks from her house in Bambang to Quiapo, clad in a maroon dress—the same color as the Black Nazarene's vestments.

She would then attend the 4 a.m. mass and participate in an hour-long rosary before walking home.

"I make sure that my everyday schedule does not change," Zurbano stressed. "My life has become more meaningful since I accepted the Black Nazarene into my heart."

METROBRIEFS

Braggart arrested

HE COULD have escaped arrest had he kept his mouth shut. However, Mario Roco, 27, of DM Compound Heroes St., Caloocan City, couldn't resist bragging about how he was able to fool policemen by changing his appearance. This eventually led to his arrest last Friday. Roco had been convicted in July 2004 and sentenced to serve 12 to 20 years in prison for possession of illegal drugs. He was, however, able to escape arrest by undergoing a facelift, even putting a mole on his jaw. He also lost weight and changed his hairstyle. But during a drinking spree in Caloocan City, Roco, who was drunk, told other people what he had done to escape arrest. "He was bragging about how his new look had deceived the arresting officers," said Chief Insp. Cresencio Galvez , head of the city's intelligence unit. Had the convicted pusher not bragged about his makeover, the police officer said, he would not have been arrested. "Maybe he thought with his new look, he could no longer be recognized," the police officer said. *Nancy C. Carvajal*

ME AND MY BIG MOUTH!

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT G. RODRIGUEZ

No trips abroad for Jaylo

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation will seek the issuance of a hold departure order against defunct Presidential Anti-Illegal Recruitment Task Force chief Reynaldo Jaylo. "We just want to be sure. If ever there would be an attempt, we will be able to stop it," NBI Special Task Force Regional Director Reynaldo Esmeralda said. But he added that he was still optimistic Jaylo, whom he described as a "friend," would turn himself in. "He has been in law enforcement for more than 20 years. He knows that no one is above the law. It is better for him to face the charges against him," Esmeralda added. The regional trial court issued an arrest warrant against Jaylo on Dec. 29, after he was charged with arbitrary detention and usurpation of authority. *Edson C. Tandoc Jr.*

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Logarta; 39

LUIS P. Logarta II passed away on Jan. 4 at the Makati Medical Center. He was 39. He left behind his wife, Ma. Melanie Edano Logarta, children Ma. Louielane, Luis III, Paolo and Gabriele, parents Alicia P. Logarta and Ernesto B. Logarta, Sr. (+), brothers former Manila Councilor Jon-jon and wife Marilou, Antonio, and Allen, nephews Bogart, Joem, Jojo and TJ. His remains lie at the St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Chapel in Magallanes Village, Makati City. His body will be transferred to Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish at the Rosario Complex, Barangay San Vicente, San Pedro, Laguna, tomorrow. Interment will be on Tuesday, Jan. 10, at the Manila Memorial Park in Dasmarinas, Cavite, after the necrological services and concelebrated Mass to be officiated by Bishop Leo M. Drona and clergies of the Diocese of San Pablo at 2 p.m.

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Editor **Teddyvic S. Melendres**

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- Morales doubts if Pacquiao can execute /A19
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- Raptor rout Rockets /A20
- Shaq may suit up for US squad /A20

Hapee five frustrates Magnolia

GAMES TODAY (San Andres Gym)
2 p.m.—Rain or Shine vs Far Eastern Insurance
4 p.m.—Montana vs Granny Goose

By Jasmine W. Payo

THE HAPEE-PCU TEETHMASTERS DID WHAT few teams could do—frustrate Magnolia and outclass the Wizards convincingly.

Riding their hot outside shooting in the second half, the Teethmasters foiled the Wizards' bid for an outright semifinal berth with an 81-70 upset yesterday in the PBL Heroes Cup at the San Andres Gym.

Robert Sanz finished with 23 points and nine boards while Gabby Espinas delivered 20 points, 11 rebounds and three blocks.

"We were hoping to stop Kelly (Williams) and Arwind (Santos) and it happened, with the players showing it in their defense," said coach Junel Baculi after his Teethmasters improved to 5-4 and stayed in contention for one of two automatic semifinal slots.

The Wizards, who stayed on top at 7-2 despite the loss, need to win at least one of their last two games to earn the semifinal incentive.

Earlier, Marcy Arellano kept Harbour Centre's quarterfinal bid alive, sparking the Portmasters' record 28-0 second quarter scoring binge that led to an 84-70 triumph over Toyota Otis-Letran. The Knights bowed out with a 2-8 card.

Arellano drilled in 14 of his 21 points in that phenomenal second period and the resurgent Portmasters cruised to their third straight win to improve to 5-5.

That run was the biggest in a quarter since Welcoat strung up 22 points over Chaz Perfume on Nov. 20, 1999. A Boyet Bautista jumper in the last six seconds of the first half ended the run.

"In the second quarter, we played our usual running game," said coach Jorge Gallent. "Marcy and Earn (Saguindel) finished our fastbreaks and Rob (Reyes) dominated the boards."

The Portmasters led by as many as 21 points, 72-51, but Fil-Am center Joe Devance powered a 16-0 run that moved the Knights within 72-67 midway in the fourth quarter.

The Hapee-PCU defense held Magnolia stars Williams and Santos to a combined 13 markers in the game that was halted for 10 minutes after a near-scuffle in the last 58.7 seconds when Santos fouled out after being slapped with an unsportsmanlike foul because of a wayward elbow. Espinas and RJ Rizada were called for technical fouls.

The scores:

First Game

HARBOUR CENTRE 84—Arellano 21, Yeo 15, Reyes 15, Tenorio 13, Paterno 8, Alonzo 6, Coching 3, Saguindel 3, Gaco 0, Menor 0, Dy 0, Luanzon 0.

TOYOTA OTIS 70—Devance 19, Aban 13, Aldave 8, Capati 8, Bautista 7, Alcaraz 4, Oreta 4, Andaya 2, Rodriguez 2, Larong 2, Daa 0, Tagupa 0, Pinera 0.

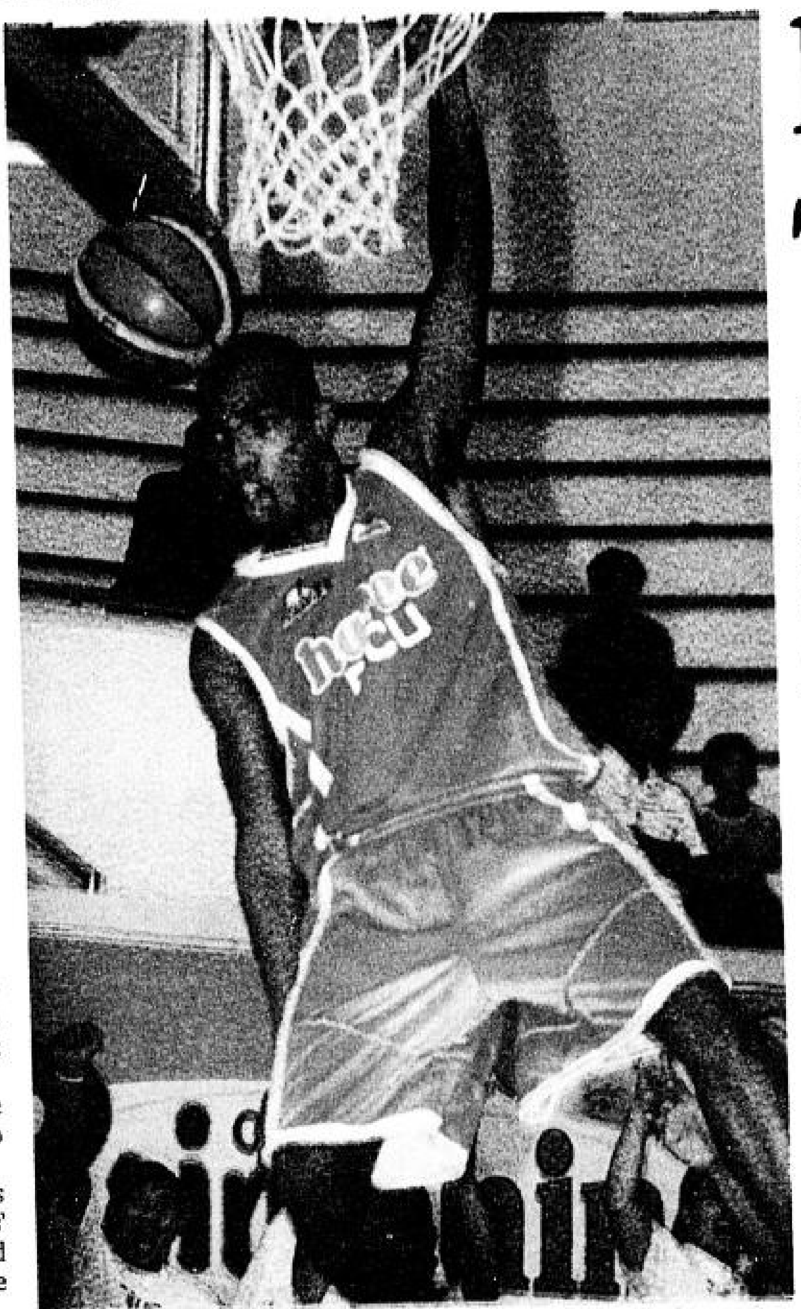
Quarters: 12-19, 40-21, 66-47, 84-70

Second Game

HAPEE-PCU 81—Sanz 23, Espinas 20, Castro 9, Gonzales 8, Belga 8, Misa 7, Razon 4, Solis 2, Moreno 0.

MAGNOLIA70—Bombeo 9, Isip 8, Santos 8, Chan 8, Jones 8, Rizada 7, Valenzuela 7, Co 6, Williams 5, Angeles 3, Te 0.

Quarters: 17-18, 32-34, 57-54, 81-70



GABRIEL Espinas does a vicious slam. RODEL ROTONI

Beermen send Tigers packing

By June Navarro

GAMES TODAY
(Cuneta Astrodome)
4:10 p.m.—Alaska vs Sta. Lucia Realty
6:40 p.m.—Air21 vs San Miguel Beer

DANNY ILDEFONSO seized the moment to help San Miguel Beer eliminate Coca-Cola, 69-67, in their San Mig Coffee-PBA Fiesta Conference survivor playoff last night at the Cuneta Astrodome.

The two-time league MVP hit a jump hook in the dying seconds and followed it up with a turnaround jumper that sealed the Beermen's entry into the wildcard phase where they face the Air21 Express in a best-of-three showdown starting today.

"I don't want to go on an early vacation," said the 2000 and 2001 season MVP Ildefonso in Filipino. "It was tough trying to score with that kind of pressure but somebody has to do it."

The Beermen escaped the ignominy of finishing last after winning the crown last year.

"It was a sigh of relief," said San Miguel Beer coach Jong Uichico. "The game could have gone either way until Danny (Ildefonso) made those two big shots for us."

The Tigers absorbed their second straight last-place finish after compiling seven victories and 11 defeats in the conference.

Omar Thomas again had a brilliant night for the Tigers with 18 points and 18 rebounds but the locals came up short with John Arigo's potential game-tying basket bouncing off the rim with just a fraction of a second left.

Earlier, Arigo's trey sparked a rally that erased a seven-point deficit with Thomas knocking in a three-pointer that finally put the Tigers ahead, 63-60, after trailing most of the second half.

But Dondon Hontiveros retaliated with a triple and added a putback off a Kwan Johnson fumble in a fastbreak play that set up a whirlwind finish in the final two minutes.

Nic Belasco bounced back from a scoreless performance by draining 14 points in the first half, highlighted by three triples.

Arigo broke the Tigers' three-minute silence with a long corner jumper but Belasco and Hontiveros ran the breaks on the other end, pushing the Beermen to a 38-31 advantage at the half.

The scores:

SAN MIGUEL 69—Belasco 16, Ildefonso 10, Hontiveros 10, Johnson 9, Seigle 9, Racela 8, Peña 4, Lopez 2, Calaguio 1.

COCA-COLA 67—Thomas 18, Singson 13, Arigo 11,

J-Ro to grace RP Ladies opening

ROSALES

PROFESSIONAL STAR JENNIFER Rosales, the most famous product of the Philippine Ladies Open golf championship, will lead the hitting of the ceremonial balls for the 44th edition of the country's No. 1 women's golf event on Tuesday at the Manila Golf Club course.

Rosales, who won the event a record five times before she turned pro in 2000, takes a break from her buildup for the new LPGA season in accepting the invitation from the organizing Women's Golf Association of the Philippines to grace the opening and welcome cocktails of the tourney starting at 4:30 p.m.

Part of the kick-off rites will be the raising of the Philippine flag and of the other six countries represented—Sri Lanka, Korea, United States, England, Singapore and Hong Kong.

The WGAP had also sent invitations to First Gentleman Mike Arroyo, National Golf Association of the Philippines president Benny Gopez, Philippine Olympic Committee head Peping Cojuangco, Manila Golf Club president Martin Romualdez and businessman Ricky Razon to join J-Ro and WGAP president Nancy Ortiga in hitting the ceremonial balls.

Though Jayvie Agojo could not make it to defend the crown she won in a thrilling shootout last year, Frances Bondad is expected to take up the cudgels and strongly bid for another victory by a national team mainstay against the foreign challengers.

Of the 80 entries accepted by the WGAP, 30 of them are foreigners headed by former champion Thuhachinii Selvaratnam of Sri Lanka and last year's runner-up Woo Young Kyung.

PNG revival in busy sked of nat'l bets

By Marc Anthony Reyes

IT WILL BE A BUSY YEAR FOR THE country's athletes with the Philippine Sports Commission set to revive the Philippine National Games as final tune-up for the RP bets before the Asian Games in Doha, Qatar, in November.

Sports in the schools will be just as lively with the Tertiary Palaro, to be handled by the Commission of Higher Education, making a comeback in October after the Palarong Pambansa and the Private Schools Athletic Association national games.

PSC chair Butch Ramirez said the staging of the events will be among the topics during the Philippine Unified Sports Conference on Feb. 15 at the Philsports.

The PNG will feature the present crop of national athletes, who secured for the country the overall championship of the 23rd Southeast Asian Games last month.

"The best of the best athletes in the country will compete in the PNG, which will be held in November," said Ramirez of the Games preceding the Asian Games in Doha, Qatar.

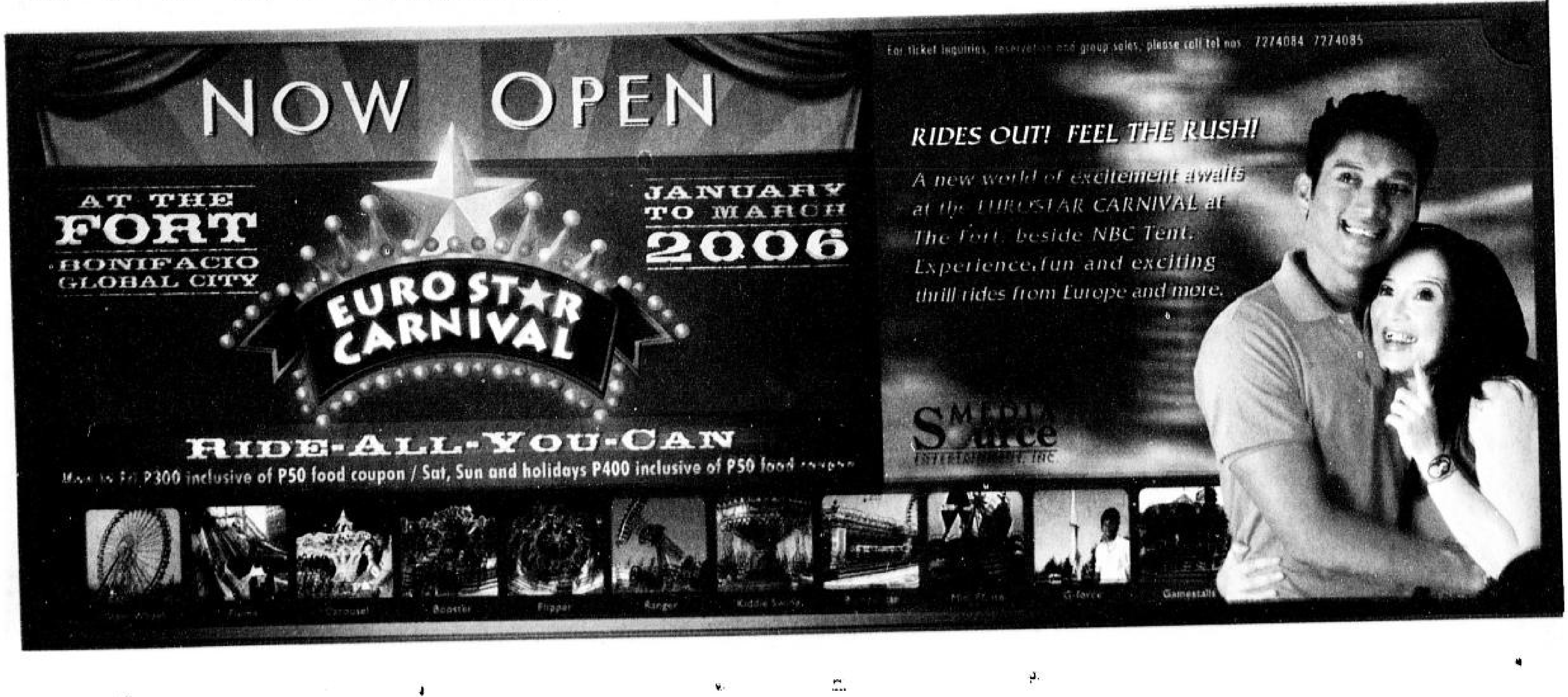
Also up for revival are the Mindanao Friendship Games, last held three years ago in Cagayan de Oro, and the Visayas and Luzon Games, according to Ramirez.

The annual Palaro, held last year in Iloilo City, is likely to be held in summer, to take advantage of the vacation break of the elementary and high school students taking part in the Games.

So far, there are three likely hosts for the Palaro—Palayan City, Nueva Ecija, Puerto Princesa, Palawan and Baguio City. The final site will be decided by the chief organizing body, the Department of Education.

The Tertiary Palaro, scrapped last year due to lack of funds, is expected to be held during the semestral break in late October.

The Private Schools Athletic Association national games is tentatively set for April in Dagupan City.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SPORTSWATCH

Olivarez, Ngo lead 18-under winners

EDWIN OLIVAREZ AND GERARD MICHAEL NGO DOWNED SEPARATE RIVALS yesterday to lead the boys' 18-under first-round winners in the 17th Andrada Cup age-group tennis tournament at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center. Olivarez defeated Joshua Galang, 6-2, 6-3, to advance against Vincent Atienza while Ngo scored a 6-4, 6-4 victory over Albert Balderas to advance against Ken Patrick Arevalo. Atienza and Arevalo drew first-round byes together with top seed Russell Arcilla Jr., second pick Leyan Moncera, No. 3 Romel Openiano, No. 4 Johnwill Baldonado, No. 5 Jose Lorenzo Opulencia, No. 6 Gerard Narvaez, No. 7 Martin Ramos and No. 8 Jarryd Mandurlao.

ESPN features NFL Wild Card games

THE 2006 NFL PLAYOFFS KICK OFF TODAY WITH A PAIR OF WILD CARD GAMES featuring the Washington Redskins against the Tampa Bay Bucaneers at 5:30 a.m. (replay at 5 p.m.) and the Jacksonville Jaguars versus the two-time defending Super Bowl champion New England Patriots at 9 a.m. (replay at 8 p.m. and midnight) live on ESPN.

Beach Volleyball on Golf Power

GOLF POWER PLUS FEATURES AT 3 P.M. TODAY THE GAME BETWEEN ADAMSON UNIVERSITY Team 1 and College of St. Benilde Team 3 in the elimination round of the Samnsung Women's Inter-Collegiate Beach Volleyball Challenge. . Golf Power is aired Sundays on RPN-9 and on ABS-CBN Global's TFC/Pinoy Central TV. It is supported by Samsung, Tanduay Rhum, PCSO, Hope and Mapecon. Fistorama follows at 4.

7-cock derby set at SJC tomorrow

THE SHOWDOWN OF BIG-TIME COCKERS RESUMES AT SAN JUAN COLISEUM tomorrow and Wednesday via the Sundance Group 7- cock derby. Sponsor is Sagupaan Complexor 3000. Derby hosts are Danny Valero and Phil Say of Sundance group. This will be third in a series of cockfests under the auspices of the National Cockers Association. Participants must submit entries today, from 2-9 p.m. and may contact 725-5369 or 0917-8041691 (Ariel).

Paragua joins Moscow event

GRANDMASTER MARK PARAGUA is joining the world's strongest Swiss system tournament—the Aeroflot Open 2006—to be held at the Tourist Hotel Complex in Moscow, Russia, from Feb. 8-16.

PARAGUA

The 21-year-old Paragua, the highest-ranked Filipino chess player with an Elo of 2618, will pit skills against highly rated woodpushers, including 1999 World Champion Alexander Khalifman (2660) of Russia.

"It's my first time to play in such a big Swiss event like Aeroflot," said Paragua, the former 1998 World Rapid-Under 14 champion and back-to-back World Cup qualifier.

"It's a big privilege to be invited and included in the strongest Swiss Open event in the world," said Paragua, who recently placed fourth in the Singapore Masters won by fellow World Cupper GM Ni Hua (2614) of China. "This will be the first time for a Filipino to join this tournament."

Other confirmed participants include Vladimir Malakhov (2694) Russia; Alexander Areshenko (2670) Ukraine; Krishnan Sasikiran (2670) India; Pavel Eljanov (2665) Ukraine; Zahar Efimenko (2655) Ukraine; Aleksej Aleksandrov (2658) Belarus; Evgeni Najer (2652) Russia; Alexander Moiseenko (2657) Ukraine; Arkadij Naiditsch (2657) Germany; Artyom Timofeev (2653) Russia; Victor Bologan (2661) Moldova; Karen Asrian (2646) Armenia and Kiril Georgiev (2645) Bulgaria.

The Group A1 tournament, exclusive for players with a FIDE rating higher than 2549, has a total of 56 entries so far. All are GMs, save for 15-year-old former world youth champion IM Ildar Khairulin of Russia

Before the Aeroflot Open, Paragua intends to take part in the Moscow Open from Jan. 29 to Feb. 6.

Paragua, a triple-gold medalist in the 2003 Southeast Asian Games, is also set to compete in Cappelle La Grande from Feb. 18-25 in France, which so far has attracted more than 90 GMs, including Krishnan Sasikiran (2670) of India and Aleksander Delchev (2661) of Bulgaria.

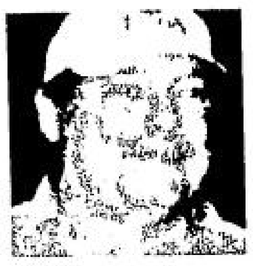
Other tournaments lined up for Paragua, the first Filipino to breach the 2600 Elo barrier, are the French Team Championships between April and May, the Spanish Team Championships between August and September and the German Team Championships between October and December.

Filway Marketings Inc. CEO/president Hector "Chito" Tagaysay and Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero "Butch" Pichay have assured Paragua of their support in his international campaign this year. *NM Marlon Bernardino*

WILD MAN SHINES: Arnold "Wild Man" Aquino em professional rider during the fifth Endurocross at the Mateo, Rizal, recently. Riding a KTM 450 EXC, Aquin Wildman Adventure Products, finished third overall Jao. Aquino earned the nickname Wild Man for his ur

18 American champions enter NCA world cockfest

EIGHTEEN AMERICAN champions will participate in the National Cockers Association (NCA) World Championship 8-cock derby on Jan. 16, 18 and 20 at the world-class San Juan Coliseum.



WOLCOTT

"We know the NCA World Championship is the best and toughest there is in the world and this is why we are coming in prepared with our best breeds," said Jimbo Cocks (Bama Sports), winner of the World Championship Cup 9-cock derby at Bayou Club in Lousiana, New Orleans.

The others are Joe Wolcott and Larry Whitehead who, with the Firefly group and Boy Marzo, are the defending champions; Dan Gray, Red Lawson and Rey Morrison, who are guests of Rep. Ronnie Puno; Aster Lopez (Asteroid), Damon Yorkman (Black Cobra Farm), Andy Robertson, who with Cox are guests of JV Magsaysay; Richard Borris, Chuck Halbert, owner of Two Dog Farms, and Richard Lanier, who are guests of Rep. Iggy Arroyo; and Jim Batiea who's a guest of Jun Topacio.

Henry Navarro, Arci Coloma, Jason Campbell, Freddie R., Bryan Cochran, Bruce Barnette, Crow Grave and Japanese Morinobu Taniguchi are also entered.

Raring to do battle with the American champions are Rudy Albano, Jimmy Ang, Patrick Antonio, Gov. Ito Ynares, Boy Jiao, Richard Bates, Boy Royo, R. Pineda and Alex Escalona.

National Rotary golf launched

THE ROTARY GOLFING FELLOWSHIP FOUNdation of the Philippines (RGFFP) is launching the first ever competition for the national Rotarian golf champion of the year during the 20th annual RGFFP tournament in Baguio on Jan. 18-22.

The top four golfers in each class here together with the top four in each category in the Southern leg will qualify for the match play championship.

Aside from the individual competition and elimination, the usual team competition (four to a team) for Rotary clubs and the guest division will be held.

Each participant will receive a P2,000 gift certificate that can be used to buy Titleist products.

PDG Dr. Bobby Legaspi of RC Baguio North said that everything is set for the Caddies' tournament and the medical and dental mission. Unilab is providing medicines and supplies worth P100,000.

Contact Pauline Sevilla (0920-9199000) or Leah Grubat (0920-9087635) at 721-8667 loc 110; telex 724-8174/721-5940 or email rgffp1997@yahoo.com.

The event is sponsored by Petron Corp., Smart Communications, Sta. Lucia Realty and Development Inc., Toyota Motors Phils., Pagcor, United Laboratories, Titleist, Asia Brewery, Citibank, OSIM, GNC, Ortigas & Co., Integrated Pipe Specialist, Burgundy Realty Corp., Enriquez Security Services, Corporate Air, Baguio Country Club, Camp John Hay Golf & Country Club and Camp John Hay Manor.

Tribu Sugbu North Cotaba

VALENCIA CITY—FORMER CHAMPION TRIBU Sugbu routed the North Cotabato Braves, 105-63, Friday to lead the 5th Day Charter Open Invitational basketball tournament at the city gym here.

Kim Calo led the Skygo/Sirlitz-backed Tribesmen with 19 points but it was last season's most improved player, Doroteo Almacin Jr., who starred in the homestretch, scoring nine of his 13 points to spark a 32-12 breakaway.

It was the second straight win for Tribu Sugbu in the five-day Nature's Spring-NBC pre-season tourney supported by Sulpicio Lines, Spring Cooking Oil, Molten and Prime Channel.

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John Hay host

THE 18TH PHILIPPINE CORPORATE Cup golf championship will be held on March 6-9 at the Camp John Hay Golf Club in Baguio City.

The 36-hole team event which will follow the four-to-play, three-to-count format and the Molave scoring system will feature a maximum field of 75 teams or 300 players, including *balikbayans* and foreigners.

The practice round will be on March 6, a bonfire/s
March 7 whil
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Al Solis."
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by Michael Orquillas, the Ex-
ked on an 18-0 run to over-
53-49 edge of Mayor Jose
Valencia cagers. Ex-pro Peter
20 points for the Explorers.

Morales doubts if Pacquiao can execute in bout

MANNY PACQUIAO CAN PLAN all he wants, but former three-division world champion Erik "El Terrible" Morales doubts whether the Filipino superstar can put all these into play in their rematch on Jan. 21 at the Thomas and Mack Center in Las Vegas.

"I understand that they (Pacquiao camp) are talking about using speed and boxing in the second fight," Morales yesterday said in a teleconference from his base in Querataro, Mexico. "We all have plans for the fight. But the question is: Can he execute?"

Morales said he doesn't expect major changes in Pacquiao's fighting style in their rematch.

"They think that they will handle me easily this time, but that is something that will not be easy against me," said Morales, who beat Pacquiao via unanimous decision in their first meeting last year.

The Mexican icon also reacted to statements made by Pacquiao about the gloves to be used.

"It's not the gloves that (will) matter, but the punches you load up on them," said Morales, who will choose from three brands —Winning, Kings or Boxing.

He will train at the Querataro mountains until Jan. 17 then flies to Vegas aboard promoter Bob Arum's private jet.

Pacquiao and his entourage will motor from LA to Las Vegas on Jan. 16 before the press conference for the fight is held on Jan. 18 at the Wynn Las Vegas Hotel's Mouton Ballroom starting at 11 a.m. The weigh-in is at 3 p.m. on Jan. 20.

Salven L. Lagumbay, contributor

Aguilar eyes hot start

GLENN AGUILAR RETURNS TO the scene of one of his best triumphs last year when he plunges into action today in the 2nd Mayor Fernando Q. Miguel Cup National Invitational Motocross and Flatrack Championships in Koronadal, South Cotabato.

Aguilar, spearhead of Revtex Rocket who owns nine national crowns and an FIM Asia-Pacific Championship, will shoot for a second straight Miguel Cup at the start of the motocross season.

"I will be going all-out to begin the year with a bang, because this can set the tone of another awesome campaign by the Revtex Motocross Team in 2006," said Aguilar, who recently was awarded his 9th Rider of the Year title by the National Motorcycle Sports and Safety Association.

s Corporate Cup March 6-9

eet party will be held on
a barbecue dinner is set
e awarding ceremonies
he 19th Tee on March 9.
e classified into Group I,
nior division based on its
ndicap indices as of Jan.
be for 5 to 9.99, Group II
Group III for 14-18.99
or 19 and above. Senior
55 years and above.

Individual groupings will be handicap 9.9 and below for Group I, 10-13.99 for Group II, 14-18.99 for Group III and 19 and above for Group IV.

Entry fee of P35,000 covers a four-night stay in two rooms at Camp John Hay Manor, a practice round, two tournament rounds, cocktails and dinners.

All entries must be received on or before Jan. 31.

For inquiries, call Jeric Hechanova 0917-5263946 or 0464300264, Jayson Yu 0918-9307451, Chatt Pagsanhan 0917-5023274 or email golf@manilasouthwoods.com.

The Corporate Cup, a brainchild of former Philippine Sports Commission chair Cecil Hechanova, is sponsored by the Camp John Hay Golf Club, the Camp John Hay Manor, Camp John Hay Development Corp. and Club Leisure Management Corp.

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3	**Christian De Jesus** of Pandacan	15	**Bella Nones** of La Union
4	**Katherine Tan** of Koronadal City	16	**Benita Ty** of Binondo
5	**Luz Ilagan** of Davao City	17	**Rodolfo de Leon** of Las Piñas City
6	**Silverius Degho** of La Union	18	**Lita Peralejo** of Quezon City
7	**Alfredo Guillermo** of Cavite	19	**Jocelyn Frial** of General Santos City
8	**Jaime Mario Cruz** of Bulacan	20	**Severino Samonte** of Quezon City
9	**Roberto Regala** of Quezon City		
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12	**Felix Vargas** of Antipolo City		

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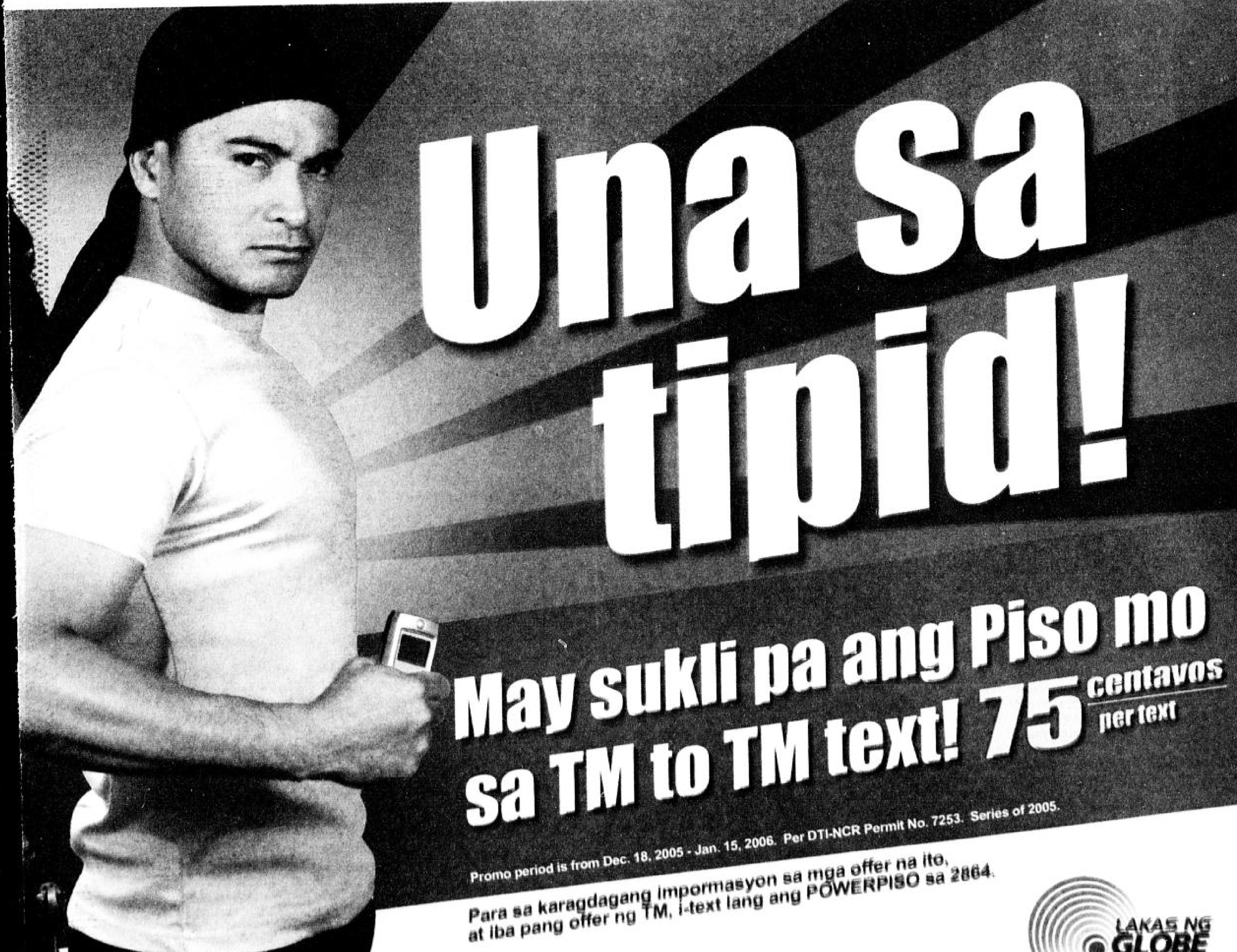
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Raptors rout Rockets

Kidd triple-double powers NJ Nets

TORONTO—MIKE JAMES HAD 30 POINTS, EIGHT assists and seven rebounds against his former team Friday, and the Toronto Raptors won their season-high fifth straight with a 112-92 rout of the Houston Rockets.

Chris Bosh added 22 points and 16 rebounds and rookie Charlie Villanueva had 21 points for the Raptors, who are on their longest winning streak since winning five straight in December 2003.

James, acquired from Houston in a trade for Rafer Alston in October, stepped up his game after Houston forward Juwan Howard was ejected for shoving him in the face with the basketball.

Alston had just two points and seven assists in 35 minutes.

Tracy McGrady scored 37 points—surpassing 30 for the fifth game in a row—but the Rockets have lost six of eight.

In East Rutherford, New Jersey, Jason Kidd had 16 points, 13 assists and 11 rebounds for his 69th career triple-double, and New Jersey beat Orlando, 113-106, for its ninth straight victory.

Vince Carter scored 31 points, going 14-of-15 from the free throw line, to lead six Nets players in double figures. Richard Jefferson added 15 points, Nenad Krstic had 14, and reserves Clifford Robinson and Jacque Vaughn each scored 10.

In Oklahoma, City, Kirk Snyder scored a career-high 22 points and David West added 19 points and 13 rebounds as New Orleans recovered from the loss of point guard Chris Paul to beat Portland, 90-80.

In New York, rookie Channing Frye matched his season high with 30 points, including 11 during a decisive 15-4 run in the third quarter, and New York beat Washington, 113-92.

In Boston, Al Harrington had 28 points and eight rebounds, and Atlanta beat Boston, 103-98, to snap a four-game losing streak.

In Auburn Hills, Michigan, Chauncey Billups and Tayshaun Prince each scored 21 points, leading Detroit over Seattle, 97-85, for its 11th victory in 12 games.

Detroit is an NBA-best 26-4, a record that trails the league's best 30-game mark by one win. Five teams started 27-3, including the 1995-96 Chicago Bulls, who won a league-record 72 games.

In Milwaukee, Chris Duhon scored 13 of his 16 points in the fourth quarter, and Chicago snapped its eight-game losing streak by beating Milwaukee, 105-91.

The last time the Bulls won in Milwaukee was 14 games ago in 1998, when Michael Jordan had 30 points in the midst of a 13-game winning streak during the final year of the Bulls dynasty.

In San Antonio, Tony Parker scored 23 points and San Antonio reversed its poor foul shooting in the final quarter to beat Minnesota, 83-77.

The Spurs were 4-for-11 at the line in the first three quarters, but shot 7-for-8 in the final period. Manu Ginobili made all four of his free throws in the final 25 seconds and finished with 21 points.

In Memphis, Tennessee, Pau Gasol scored 27 points and matched his career high with 18 rebounds to help Memphis beat Utah, 87-65, snapping the Jazz's five-game winning streak.

In Phoenix, Steve Nash dished out 12 assists in a 47-point first quarter for Phoenix, and the Suns raced past depleted Miami, 111-93.

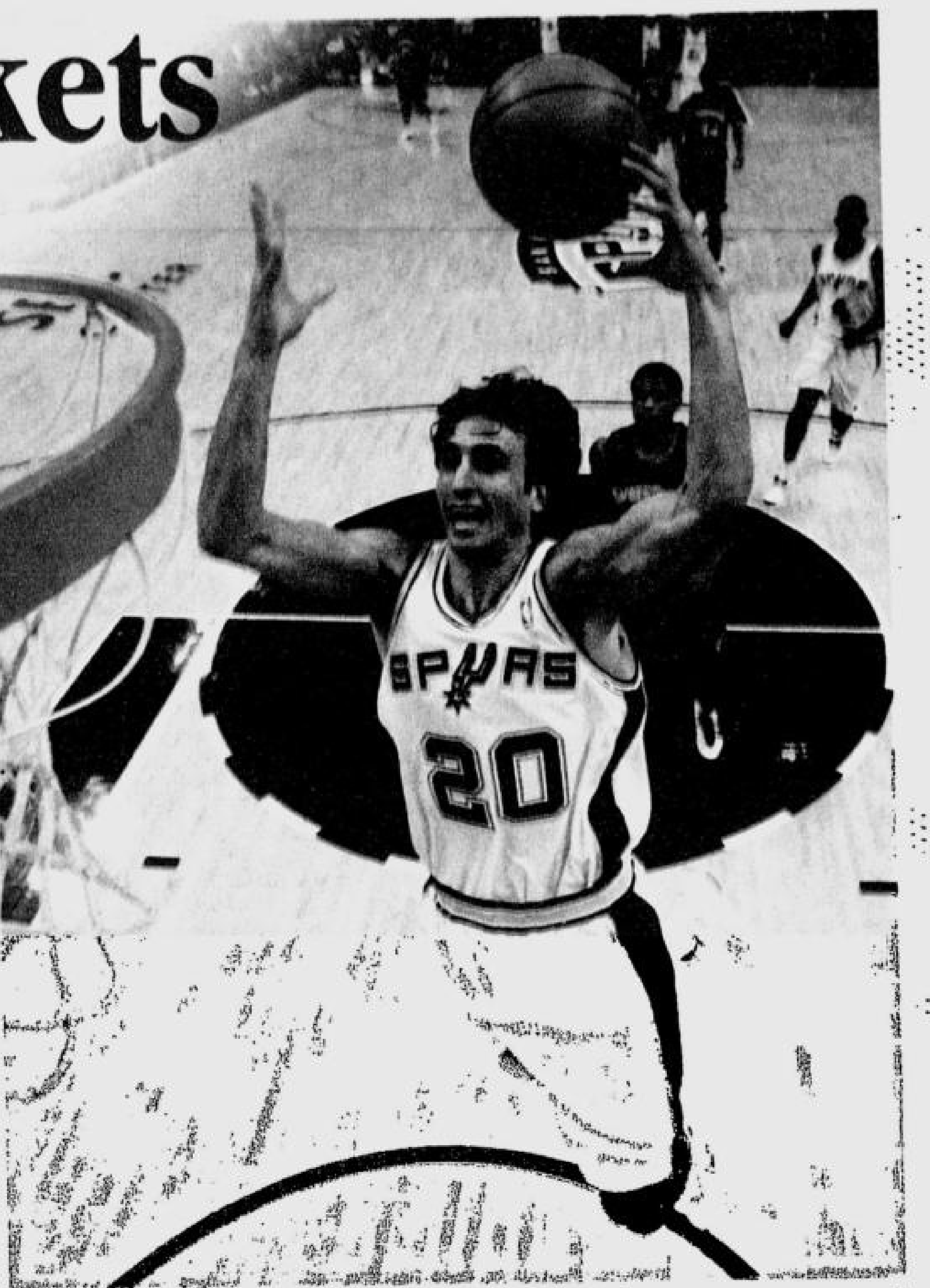
Nash broke the franchise record and tied for second-most assists in a quarter in NBA history. Last season's league Most Valuable Player finished with 19 assists and 11 points in Phoenix's sixth victory in seven games.

At Los Angeles, Kobe Bryant returned from a two-game suspension to help the Los Angeles Lakers end a five-game losing streak with a 119-93 ambush of Philadelphia.

In Denver, Devin Harris made an incredibly easy layup with 2.2 seconds left in overtime to lift Dallas over Denver, 114-112.

In Sacramento, California, Mike Bibby clobbered the Clippers again with 11 of his 32 points in the fourth quarter, and Brad Miller had 26 points and a huge defensive play in the final seconds of Sacramento's 11th straight victory over Los Angeles, 118-114. *AP*

NBA on TV: San Antonio @ Phoenix, 10 a.m., Solar Sports (replay at 7 p.m.); Minnesota @ Dallas, 9 p.m. RPN-9



SAN ANTONIO Spurs guard Manu Ginobili soars for an easy twinner. AP

Shaq may suit up for US squad

PHOENIX—JERRY COLANGELO, PUTTING together the US basketball team for the 2006 world championships and 2008 Olympics, said Shaquille O'Neal has not ruled out participating.

Colangelo, managing director of USA Basketball, spoke to O'Neal on Thursday as part of his meetings with NBA players prior to training camp later this year.

"I thought that going in that he had indicated there wasn't much interest and he felt it was time for others to step in," Colangelo said Friday night. "After I spoke with him, he said 'Now you've got me rethinking about it.'"

He said that he felt he should speak to O'Neal "out of respect for him."

Colangelo also met with O'Neal's Miami teammate Dwyane Wade.

"He's one of the up-and-coming young stars of the game," Colangelo said.

Players must make a three-year commitment to join the camps and exhibition games leading up to the events. The shake-up of USA basketball followed the team's bronze medal performance in the Athens Olympics. *AP*

HINGIS REUTERS

Hingis return runs into tough draw

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA—MARTINA HINGIS DREW French Open champion Justine Henin-Hardenne on Saturday for a first-round match in the Sydney International, the Swiss star's biggest test in her comeback attempt from chronic foot problems.

Hingis, sidelined for three years, is using the Sydney tournament as her final tuneup for the Australian Open, which begins Jan. 16 in Melbourne. She won the Australian Open three consecutive years from 1997-99.

The fifth-seeded Henin-Hardenne, the 2004 Australian Open winner, is coming off a hamstring problem that derailed her last season after her win at Roland Garros.

The 25-year-old Hingis won three matches in the Australian women's hardcourt championships before falling to Italy's Flavia Pennetta in the semifinals Friday.

The top four seeds—No. 1 Kim Clijsters, No. 2 Amelsie Mauresmo, No. 3 Patty Schnyder and No. 4 Nadia Petrova—received first-round byes.

On Saturday in Gold Coast, Czech left-hander Lucie Safarova won her third WTA Tour title, beating Pennetta, 6-3, 6-4, in the Australian women's hardcourt.

In Auckland, New Zealand, France's Marion Bartoli won her first WTA singles title Saturday, beating Russia's Vera Zvonareva, 6-2, 6-2, in the ASB Women's Classic.

Also Saturday in the Adelaide International semifinals, France's Florent Serra beat Dominik Hrbaty of Slovakia, 6-3, 6-3, and Belgium's Xavier Malisse defeated Tomas Berdych, 6-4, 6-0.

On Friday in Doha, Qatar, defending champion Roger Federer beat Germany's Tommy Haas, 6-3, 6-3, in the semifinals of the Qatar Open.

The top-ranked Swiss player will face former French junior star Gael Monfils, a 6-3, 6-4 winner over Italy's Filippo Volandri. *AP*

Caddies' tournament lowers age limit

THE SECOND NATIONAL CADDIES' Open will be staged in the third week of February in Calatagan, Canlubang and Wack Wack with the field of entries limited to younger players.

From 35 last year, this edition's age limit has been pegged at 25. Organizers, however, will allow sons of caddies and those who work in golf courses like greens keepers, grounds keepers, and even driving range tee boys to vie in the tournament.

Interested participants can fill out the nomination forms to the golf clubs next week. They may fax or hand carry them to the NCO secretariat at Calatagan (fax 0919-5470619) or Wack Wack (02-7238556) on or before Feb. 10.

Inquiries can also be coursed through Dave Hernandez at 0917-8425275 or 0917-8425257.

Each nomination form should be accompanied by a certified true copy of participant's birth certificate and should be signed by the general manager of the course the participant will represent.

The organizers also limited the number of the golf course's representatives to a maximum of five and urged the club management to hold qualifying tournaments so that only the best players can compete in the NCO tournament.

Last year, 146 players from as far as Saranggani in Mindanao to Baguio up north played in the Calatagan tournament.

Brothers Mario and Joseph Labajo and eventual winner Jonel Ababa stood out and availed themselves of a long-term program that has fed, housed, trained and funded them for the last 10 months.

US breeders hit town

THE AMERICAN contingent seems dead serious in wrestling the World Slasher Cup title from Filipino defending champion Boy Marzo in the three-day derby cockfight at the Araneta Coliseum on Jan. 17, 19 and 21. Bobby Fairchild, and Jessie Smith of Oklahoma, Joe Stanfield, Ferdie Patam and Speedy Gonzales of California, William Corkren and Christy Borovien of Alabama, Lloyd Bernardo and Karl Casco of Hawaii. The other foreign entries who have hit town earlier are Roger Roberts of Georgia and 2001 World Slasher Cup champions, the Lanier brothers of Florida. The event is sponsored by the Thunderbird power pellets and San Miguel derby ace feeds. A brand new car will be awarded to the tournament's champion.

Appleby rolls up sleeves, works way to Mercedes lead

KAPALUA, HAWAII—THE SCENERY SUGgests a vacation in paradise. The golf was all work Friday in the Mercedes Championships, where defending champion Stuart Appleby survived 56 kph (35 mph) gusts for a 1-under 72 to take a one-shot lead into the weekend.

The trade wind was among the fiercest since this season-opening event moved to Kapalua in 1999, but the name atop the leaderboard should look familiar. Appleby is trying to become the first player in nearly 50 years to capture the winners-only tournament three straight times.

But it hasn't been easy.

He hit his tee shot into the knee-high weeds on the 18th hole and made a bogey, finishing his two rounds at 3-under 143. He won the last two years with scores of 21 and 22 under par.

"If anyone gets to double figures, that would be excellent golf," Appleby said.

David Toms missed a 6-foot birdie putt on the 18th hole that could have caught Appleby, settling for an even-par 73 to join US Open champion Michael Campbell (72), former US Open champion Jim Furyk (72) and three-time major champion Vijay Singh (74) at 2-under 144.

That kind of pedigree shows what type of golf is required.

"It's good practice for the (British) Open," Campbell said.

Sergio Garcia (74) and Olin Browne (76) were the only other players to survive par on a Plantation course that was tough on lightning-quick greens that moved to warp speed when the gusts were at a peak.

It was a rude reminder that coming to Hawaii doesn't make this a vacation.

The course average was 75.5, the toughest round in the eight-year history at Kapalua, and the wind is responsible for most of that. *AP*

RACING TIPS

TOP CHOICE (Edgar Mendez)

Race 1—(Qrt/Tri)—Strong Jays (4), Jayvie's Godfather (1), Silver Dollar (5), Order of Merit (6)
Race 2—Sharon's Cookie (2); Angel Of Light (3)
Race 3—(Penta/Tri)—Santiago (8), Chabacana (1), Dancing Ballerina (5), Znarf (4), Cool Cielo (3)
Race 4—(Tri)—Ocean Deep (3), Man Power (4) Run Like D' Wind (2)
Race 5—(Qrt/Tri)—Bumper To Bumper (4), Tout Est Grace (2), Tootolal (1), Alexis Magic (6)
Race 6—(Qrt/Tri)—Screaming Eagle (5), Guided Missile (2), Fong Shui (6), Fastteller (7)
Race 7—(Qrt/Tri)—Marque (5), Surprise Target (1), Good Landing (4), Michael Da Dragon (2)
Race 8—(Qrt/Tri)—Red Phoenix (3), Sound Of The Wind (6), Premiere Act (8), Empire State (4)
Race 9—(Tri)—Propensity (1), Arrivederci (4), Golden Pharach (2)
Race 10—(Qrt/Tri)—Raging River (8), ocona Dignity (6), Special Lad/La Española (5), Spoiler (7)
Race 11—(Penta/Tri)—Starsky And Hutch (11), Field Star (6), Shipman (9), Real TOugh (4), Mr. Lucas (3)
Race 12—(Qtr/Tri)—Silver Eagle (3), Romario (4), Shdty (7), Steel Smasher (2)
Race 13—(Super 6/Qtr/Tri)—Mika's Dream (7), Distinctive Dancer (7), Quick Play (12), C Tonet (1), King's Dominion (5), Tonic Water (4)

APT's 'poktanju' & more

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

THE "APT" IN THE APT CUP DOES NOT only stand for "Art P. Tugade."

APT also stands for "Airports Ports Terminals" and the APT Cup is a golf tournament that is not only much-talked about but also well-attended not only for its perks and creative innovations but also for its charitable intentions.

It is also one of the country's well-run events, whose preparation usually lasts four months.

"We began preparations as early as September," said Rolly Enriquez, one of the tournament's moving forces. "It was supposed to have a field of only 100 but people and friends kept requesting that they be invited and so, the bloated roster."

Players here are required to wear outfits copied mostly from celluloid icons. Thus, of the 177 participants or so on Friday at The Orchard, some were dressed as Batman, Superman, Mulawin, Joker, Swat, Mickey Mouse and many others. To me, what stood out was the priest's immaculate white "*sutana*" worn by the four-man team of Jimmy Bautista, the president of Philippine Airlines.

At the locker room, many of the players went to "Fr. Bautista" before teeing off and begged for forgiveness, some on their knees like Jake Ayson and Dingo Bonifacio (both in Superman suits). The most famous opening line from each confessing golfer was, "Bless me Father for I have sinned in 2006."

Art P. Tugade started the APT Cup nine years ago as a mere fun tournament in the "APT" world peopled mostly by airline, ports and terminals executives. I will not be surprised if more innovations are introduced next year, 2007 being the tournament's 10th anniversary.

I wonder if a new concoction would be added to that knockout drink called "poktanju," a Korean drink consisting of beer and scotch in a mug drank bottoms-up-served to first-time participants gathered on stage with division winners and raffle winners. I had a couple of mugs of that on Friday and, boy, did I get a jolt!

But the APT Cup is more than just a fun golf tournament.

It boasts of having some of the handsomest raffle prizes and hole-in-one perks in the country.

This year, Isuzu Motors donated a Trooper and D-MAX as hole-in-one prizes (nobody won). Two par 3 greens had five holes each and anyone holing a tee shot in any of the holes would win P10,000; Dan Salvador sank one.

For raffles alone, there were 10 "minor" prizes and 25 major prizes, including 9 plane tickets from 7 airlines (PAL, Emirates, Asiana, Kuwait, Corporate Air, Cathay Pacific's Vivian Lo gave 2 tickets and Eva Air).

"But not only are all the participants happy," said Art. "Our caddies, too."

Art handed out P30,000 to the caddies from the mulligan proceeds.

Art's wit is as much appreciated when he's on stage as his big, big heart when off it.

A couple of years back, he fell so terribly ill that Art said he honestly felt it was time for him to go.

"But I survived the ordeal, thank God, I did," said Art, a rags-to-riches story whose days as a San Beda student were as dramatic, if not as colorful, as his jokes while on the mike.

"I would like to thank my wife, Marisol, and four children for always supporting my projects, including the foolish ones such as the APT Cup," Art said during the awarding ceremonies to the guffaws of the audience.

He thanked God almighty, the weather and the participants "for without God's blessings, we would not have had a good weather and we would not have had a good time in each other's company today."

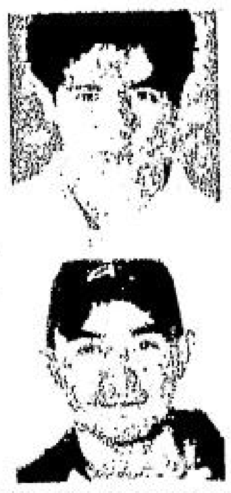
He then called on everyone to join him at the Tuloy Sa Don Bosco Foundation, San Jose Alabang (near the Gaches Village), at 2 p.m. today (Sunday) "as my family and I will be amongst street children. You don't have to bring anything or give anything. Just seeing you there would be enough."

Indeed, golf isn't just a game. It is also people.

***

FASTBREAK. Congratulations to Lovell B. Gopez for having been promoted President & COO of Gopez Corporation, which is the holding group of Master Sports. Lovell is President & CEO in a concurrent capacity of Master Sports, which distributes Mizuno golf equipment and badminton gear in the country. I've seen Lovell grow from his toddler days at Ateneo to an astute executive right out of college at the family-owned business that also includes the Citgo franchise and BMG Solar heaters. Cheers Lovell!

INSIDE



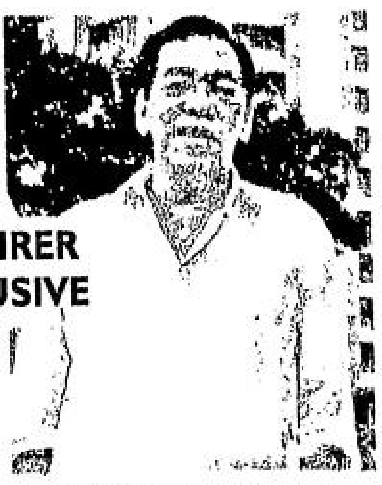
■ Getting naughty with the stars /A4-4

Jackie Atienza: I am my own man

New FDCP head wants everyone to know he supports indie films

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE



ATIENZA's focus is economic viability RODEL ROTONI

IN HIS OWN WORDS, THE new head of the Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP), Rolando "Jackie" Atienza, 61, is "a finance man."

Educated in Ateneo and Wharton, he has worked in various investment and securities firms. His most significant stints in the film industry are as president of Bancom Audiovision from 1978 to 1981 and as vice chair of Viva Entertainment, from 2002 to 2005.

Under his term, Bancom produced award-winning films like Lino Brocka's "Jaguar," Mike de Leon's "Kisapmata," Laurice Guillen's "Salome," Marilou Diaz-Abaya's "Brutal" and Eddie Romero's "Aguila."

What are your plans for the FDCP?

My emphasis is to develop the economic viability of the film industry which can be done by lowering production costs—through certain tax exemptions and by adding the movie industry in the preferred industries list of the Board of Investments. That's a list designed to give incentives to specific industries, to help producers tap available funds.

Does the tax holiday include amusement taxes?

Only tax breaks on certain categories like capital equipment, digital cameras or raw film stock.

We also need to improve the marketing of Filipino films, especially abroad. The thrust should be to export to regional rather than Western markets.

Do you think the movie industry is dying?

It is dying because the investment viability is threatened by the importation of foreign films, piracy and alternative media.

How can we protect local films from Hollywood?

One way is to have preferential taxes—additional taxes on imported, but not on local, films.

How can we cope with piracy?

The government is doing its best. The raids should focus on the sources, not retailers.

How about competition posed by alternative media?

Alternative media, like TV, cable and DVD, also offer opportunities. At some point, the total revenues of a movie product should be bigger in the ancillary sales (cable, TV, video) than at the box office.

What's your take on the independent digital film movement?

It's the wave of the future. We are planning a Visayan digital film festival to allow filmmakers from there to tell their stories.

There are misgivings about your Viva background.

I was a financial consultant to Vic del Rosario. He made me vice chair. I resigned in January 2005. People may think of me as Vic del Rosario's man, but I am my own man. I'm too old to be another person's man.

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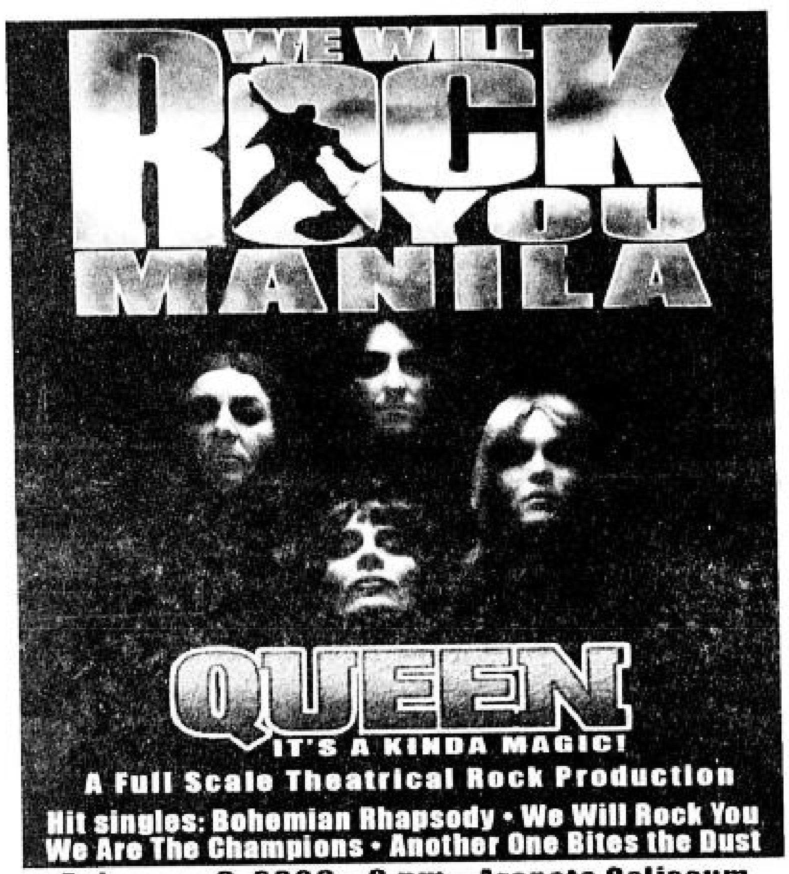

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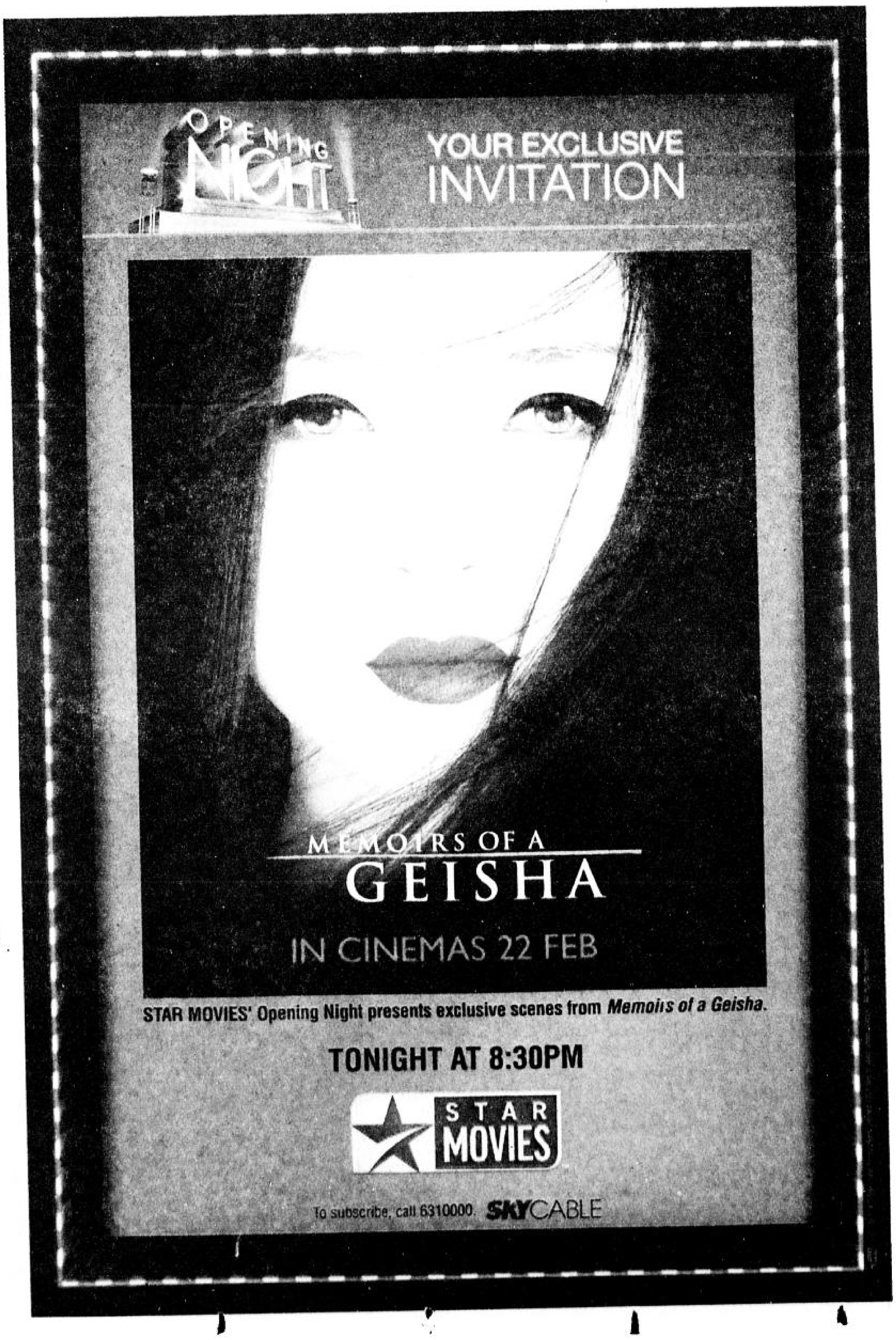

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ENTERTAI

OPENING TODAY

Don't Give Up On Us

Stars Judy Ann Santos, Piolo Pascual, Hilda Koronel, Rio Locsin

Directed by Bb Joyce Bernal

Santos and Pascual's reunion movie after three years is touted as a "more mature" outing ... promising "new dimensions in their acting and rapport." Actually, it's yet another "poignant love story" between opposites—Santos is a cranky control freak; Pascual, a free-spirited folk singer. In search of her brother's runaway bride, the bossy heroine meets her romantic foil, who teaches her "to stop and smell the flowers." Well, the film is set in scenic Baguio and Sagada, making the "flower-smelling" task a cinch for the O.C. leading lady. In fact, she gives up urban life for farming in the boondocks. The problem is, he tries his luck as a musician in the big, bad city. Never the twain shall meet?

Beautiful Boxer

Stars Assani Suwan, Sorapong Chatree, Orn-anong Panyawong, Kyoko Inoue

Directed by Ekachai Uekrongtham

Based on the amazing true story of Thai kickboxer Noong Toom, the film is dubbed "Million Baht Baby" by one critic. The twist is, the sport underdog is saving up his earnings for a sex change operation. A darling of the film fest circuit, the movie won the top prize at the International Festival of Independent Film held in Brussels in 2004. James Woolley of the BBC affirms: "[With] the opulent panorama of Thailand as a backdrop, there's plenty for the eyes to feast on . . . [An] inspiring drama, despite its uneven nature, [it] still packs a punch."

The Family Stone

Stars Sarah Jessica Parker, Diane Keaton, Claire Danes, Rachel McAdams, Luke Wilson

Directed by Thomas Bezucha

For a holiday reunion, a family of bohemians must cope with a son's unlikely choice of a bride—an uptight New Yorker (Parker). Why a clan of "idealists" can be so prejudiced against a girl "whose only crime is that she is too much like Martha Stewart" is perplexing. Wesley Morris of the Boston Globe states: "The first half of [the film] is several movies happening at once and they're all simultaneously overwritten and not fleshed out enough..." Roger Ebert of the Chicago Sun-Times points out: "[It's] silly at times, leaning toward screwball tradition... [but it] sorts out its characters admirably."

The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe

Stars Tilda Swinton, Jim Broadbent, Elizabeth Hawthorne, Georgie Henley

Directed by Andrew Adamson

C.S. Lewis' fanciful novel is ripe for a big-screen adaptation. "Shrek 1 and 2" director Adamson is recruited by partners Disney and Walden Media for a hoped-for "ongoing franchise." Amid the World War II blitzkrieg, four children are packed off to the countryside by their mom. While playing hide-and-seek and cricket, the kids stumble into an enchanted wardrobe that serves as portal to the kingdom of Narnia, where they meet fauns, centaurs, talking beavers and the mighty lion Aslan (voiced by Liam Neeson). They join Aslan in the fight against Jadis the White Witch (Swinton). Critics are conflicted. Josh Bell of Las Vegas Weekly opines: "Whenever the film is overwhelmed by action or religion, it feels lost, but whenever it allows the whimsy of its source material to shine through, it takes on a pleasant life of its own." Ross Anthony of the Hollywood Report Card thinks it's a cross

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between "The Lord of the Rings" and "The Passion of the Christ."

Saint Ange

Stars Virginie Ledoyen, Lou Doillon, Jerome Soufflet, Dorina Lazar

Directed by Pascal Laugier

Set in 1960s France, this thriller is based on a true story and also goes by the title "House of Voices." It stars Ledoyen (Leonardo DiCaprio's leading lady in "The Beach") as a young cleaning woman who endures all sorts of bizarre hauntings in an abandoned orphanage in the Alps. The spook fest is reviewed favorably by Vince D'Amato of the Hollywood North Report: "Utterly striking, every shot looks absolutely beautiful." Christopher Smith of the Week in Rewind.com was unimpressed: "[It's] silly and derivative."

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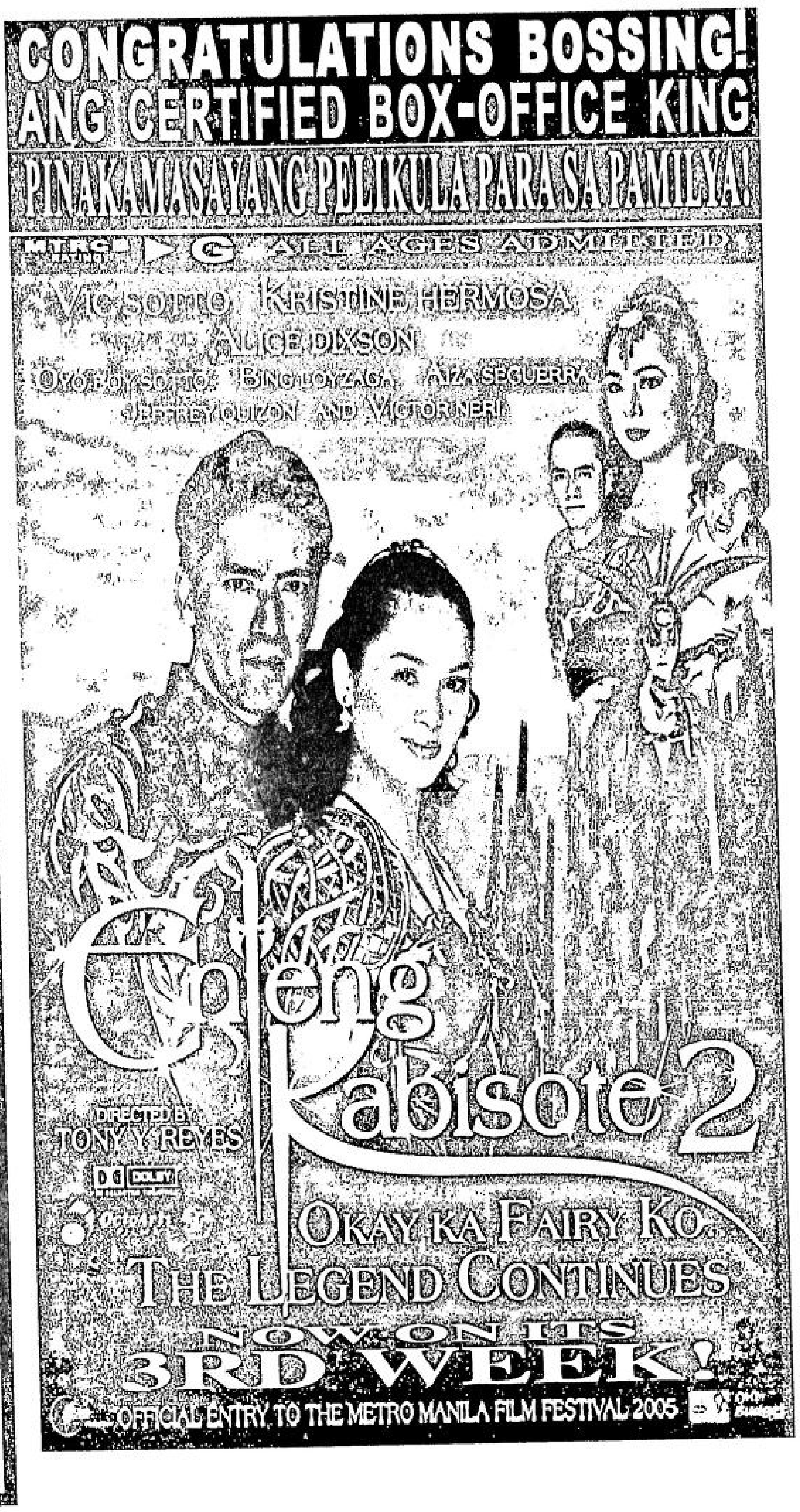
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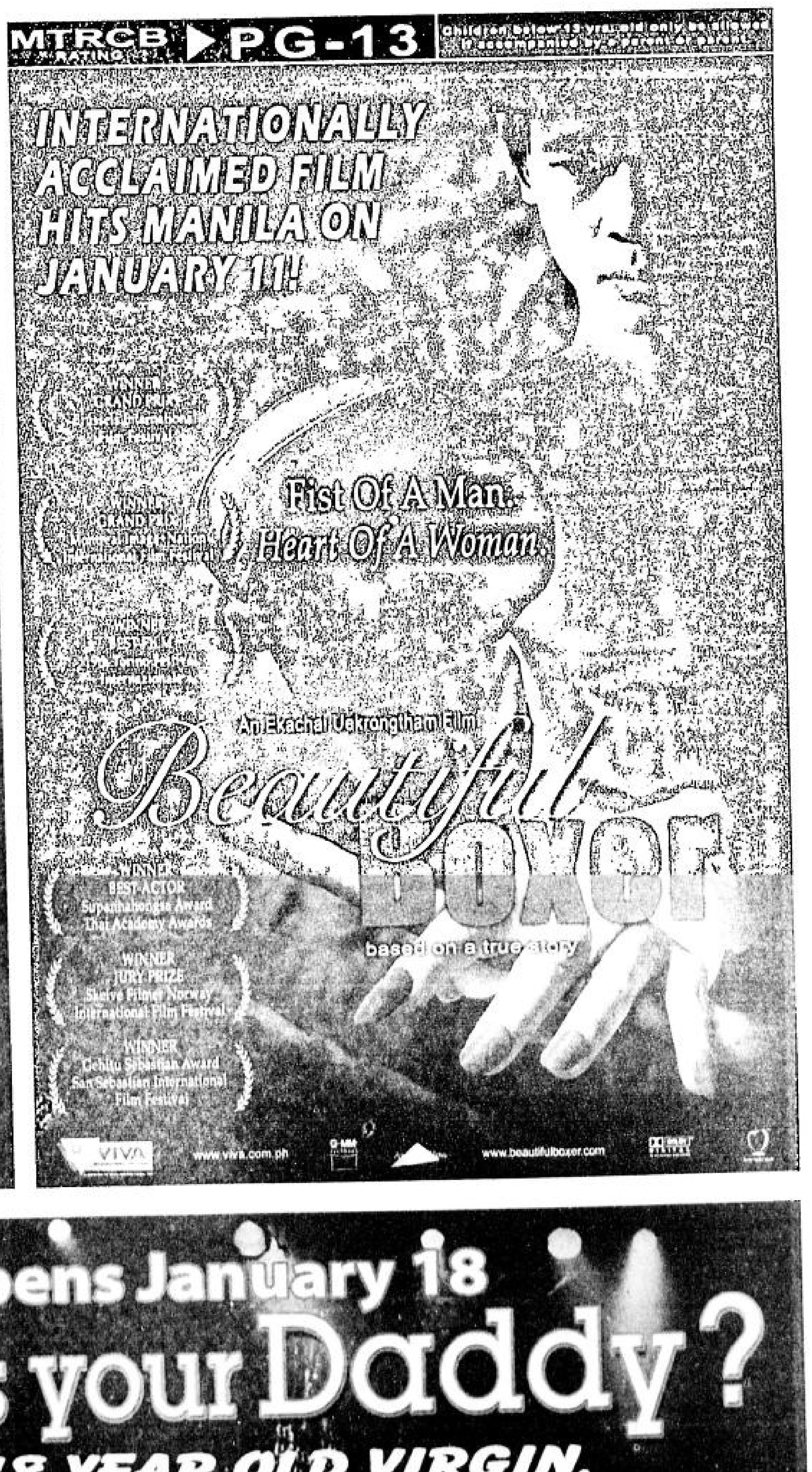
JEROME SOUFFLET PRODUCED BY CHRISTOPHE GANS SCREENWRITER PASCAL LAUGIER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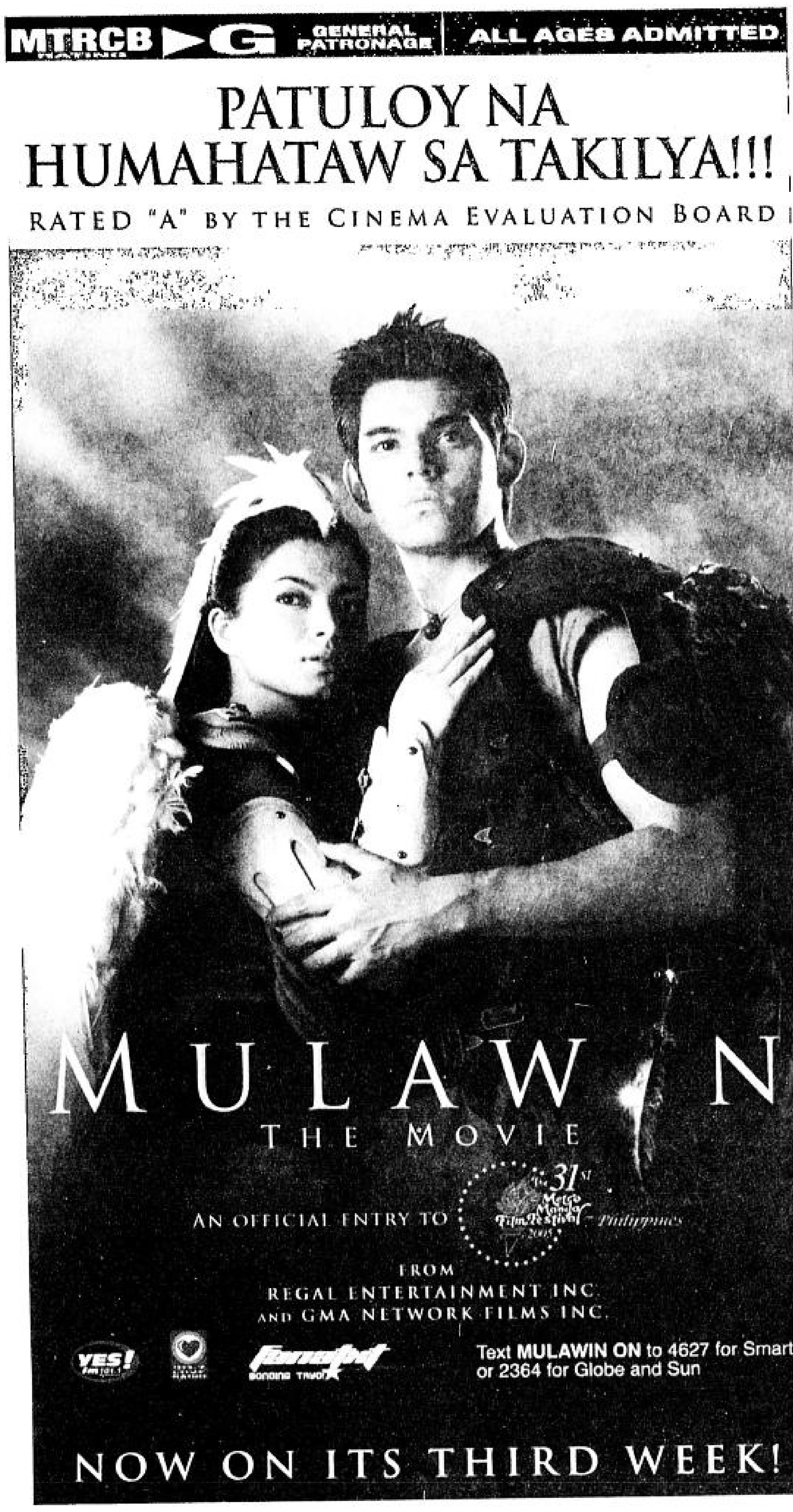

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SHOW TIME

SOME 400 MULTI-NATIONAL JAZZ artists are slated to perform in the country's 1st International Jazz and Arts Festival. The festival runs for four days, kicking off with a street party at The Podium on Friday, Jan. 20, and finishing at the Greenbelt Fountain on Jan. 23. The main events, will take place simultaneously at the Airport Casino Filipino Amphitheater and the new Harbor Square CCP on Jan. 21 and 22, with uninterrupted performances from 10 a.m. to 1 a.m.

The artists who will fly in from all over the world to perform at the Ampitheater include Kevyn Lettau, Eumir Deodato, Sirocco, Charmaine Clamor; they will be joined by Verni Varga. Featured acts on Stage One include Grace Nono and Bob Aves, the UP Jazz Ensemble, sax phenomenon Alvin Cornista, Nyko Maca, swing-reggae band Brownbeat Allstars, jazz super-band Affinity and Brass Munkeys. Stage Two will have Romy Posadas, Henry Katindig, Mon David, Colby dela Calzada, Koko Bermejo, Mishka Adams, JunJun Regalado, Bituin Escalante, Cynthia Alexander and many others.

This even has been inspired by The Earth Day Jazz Festival last April 24 at the Power Plant Mall and JazzPhil USA Pinoy Jazz Festival in Hollywood, California. The Philippines, despite being known as the "Jazz Center in Asia," has not held its own international jazz festival until now.

The Jazz Society of the Philippines has put this even together in cooperation with the Department of Tourism. "This will enrich our local jazz community, as well as develop our international relations," says Sandra Lim-Viray, jazz vocalist and JSP president.

Tickets are available at Ticketnet, Ticketworld, The CCP Harbor Square, Casino Filipino, and other participating establishments. For details, log on to wwww.pijazzfest.com.

The Lettermen

The Lettermen, "the most romantic singing group of the '60s," will be in the Philippines to perform in a series of pre-Valentine shows—on Jan. 26 at the Manila Hotel, Jan. 28 at the Araneta Coliseum, Cubao, Quezon City, Jan. 29 in Iloilo City, Jan. 30 in Cebu City and Jan. 31 in Davao City.

"The Lettermen Livel In Manila" is presented by Renen de Guia's Ovation Productions and Solar Entertainment Corp. The dinner show at the Manila Hotel will feature The Three Tenors—Angelo Reyes, Joey Lina and Bayani Fernando—as guests.

Tickets for the Araneta Coliseum concert are priced at P3,000, P2,500, P2,000, P1,500, P800 and P300 and are available at Ticketnet outlets at SM Department Stores; or call Ticketnet at 9115555. For the Manila Hotel dinner-show, call Beth Tagle, tel. no. 4387200.

The Lettermen was formed more than 45 years ago. The current group is composed of original founding member Tony Butala, plus Donovan Tea and Darren Dowler. The two other former Lettermen were Jim Pike and Bob Engemann.

JAYA

LETTERMEN

Tomorrow

9th Avenue at Virgin Café, Tomas Morato, QC

Freeway at Suburbia

Dawn and Eugene at Merk's, Greenbelt 3

January 10

Shayne with Brown Sugar Factory at Virgin Café, Tomas Morato, QC

H2O at Suburbia

Aretha and the Souled Out Band at Merk's, Greenbelt 3

January 11

Side A at Virgin Café, Tomas Morato, QC

KEVYN Lettau

Freeverse at Suburbia

Richard Merk, Eddie K and Sandra Lim at Merk's, Greenbelt 3

January 12

Michael Angelo and Mocha with Spin Art at Virgin Café, Tomas Morato, QC

Ron Antonio at Suburbia

Marri Nallos at Hyatt Marina Casino Hotel in Manila

January 13

Jaya 10 ... Livel@Zirkoh, Timog Ave., QC.

True Faith and NTwineat Virgin Café, Tomas Morato, QC

Twisted Pair and Livewire at Suburbia

Route 70 at Merk's, Greenbelt 3

January 14

Orange and Lemons in "Local Ground" at the Bloomfield Academy in Las Piñas. Call 874-1513.

Wiseguys and Escapeat Virgin Café, Tomas Morato, QC

604 and 9th Avenue at Suburbia

Marri Nallos at Hyatt Regency's Calesa Bar

Amadeus at Merk's, Greenbelt 3

January 16

9th Avenue at Virgin Café, Tomas Morato, QC

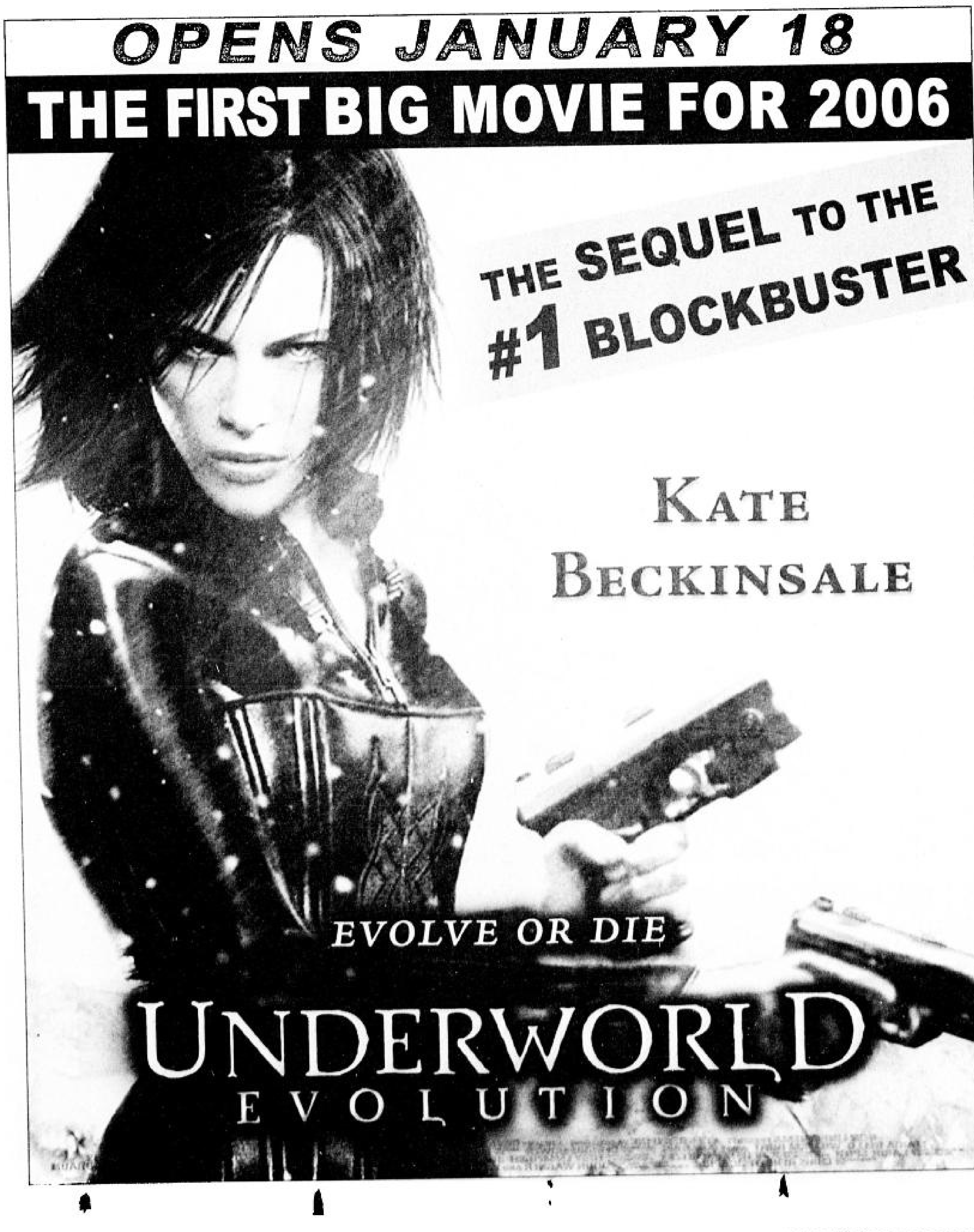
Freeway at Suburbia

Dawn and Eugene at Merk's, Greenbelt 3

January 17

H2Oat Virgin Café, Tomas Morato, QC

Shayne and Brown Sugar Factory at Suburbia



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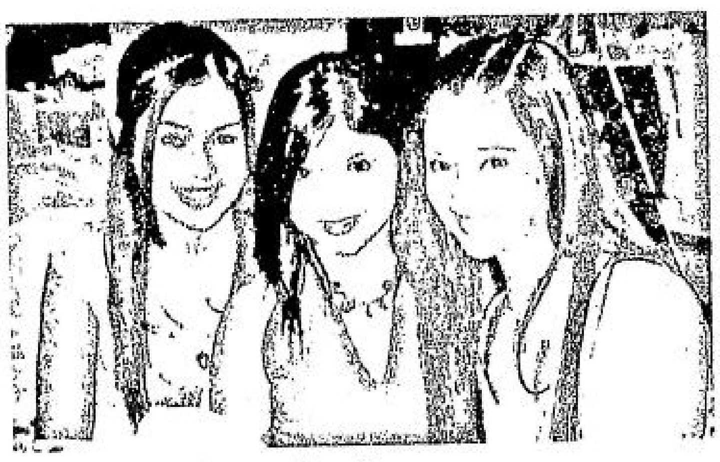


NEW FACES in the scene: Honnies

From Sooperbabes to Honnies

AUDITIONS FOR AN ALL-FEMALE singing group yielded young solo artists.

"At first, the search was just for five girls to replace those who left the eight-member band Sooperbabes," said Glenna Malaki and Lenin A. De Guzman, artist managers of Manila Star Caravan, an events and artist management company.

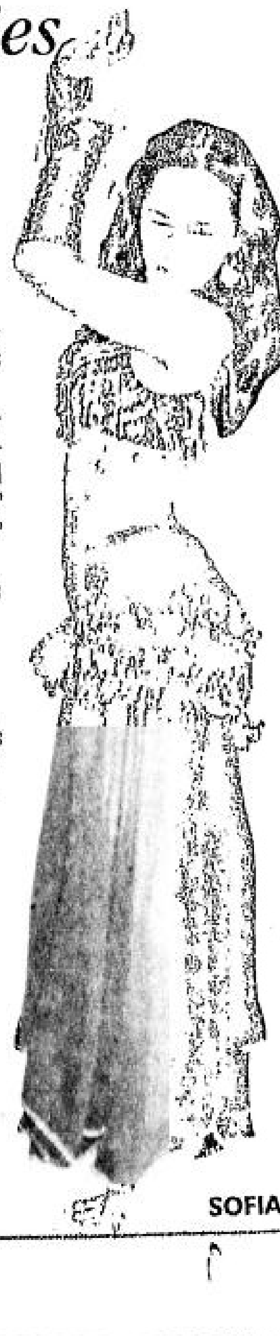
Sooperbabes was an all-female sing-and-dance group launched in 2004 under Galaxy Records. They popularized the hit songs "Shake Body Dancer," "Miss na Miss kita" and "Johnny Angel."

They disbanded a year later.

MSC execs noted that many girls who came to the auditions were potential individual acts. So now, there are the Honnies—composed of original Sooperbabes Terry Tan, Venus Sedillo and Tina Bonus, plus fresh "finds" Auriette, Jessica Fernando, Red, Sofia, Ohna, Caravenos, Bee Vito, and Joyce de Guzman.

"The girls have a wide song repertoire—from Latin to Broadway," Malaki said.

The Honnies have performed in provincial tours, mall tours and corporate events. They have also appeared the television programs "ASAP," "Unang Hirit," "Magandang Umaga Bayan," "MTB Ang Saya-Saya," Mastershowman" and "Okay Fine Whatever." *Anne Luisa E. Villarico*



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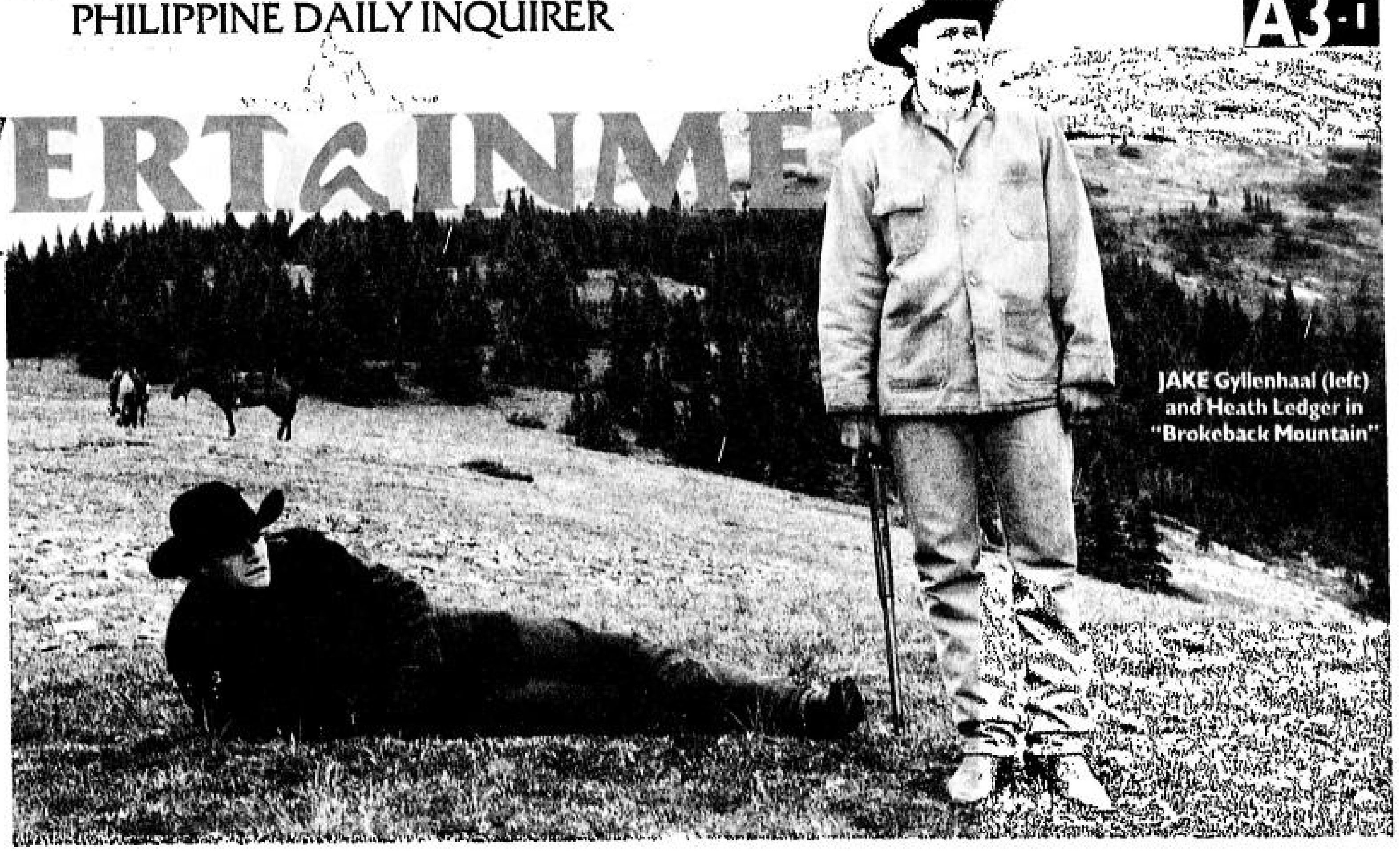
ENTERTAINME

Actors pick 2005's best



JAKE Gyllenhaal (left) and Heath Ledger in "Brokeback Mountain"

Fil-Am actress in TV dance contest

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—FILIPINO-American actress **Tia Carrere** is competing in the second season of "Dancing With the Stars," which premiered last Thursday evening on the US TV network, ABC.

A surprise hit when it debuted, "Dancing" pairs up stars with professional dance partners (in other words, DIs) to compete before a panel of expert judges, a la "American Idol."

Tia, who gave birth to a baby girl last September, is up against **Imelda Marcos'** friend, **George Hamilton**, Oscar-winning actress **Tatum O'Neal**, rapper and music mogul **Master P** and former 98 Degrees member **Drew Lachey**, among others.

Tia and her partner, **Maksim Chmerkovskiy**—if they survived the first round last Thursday—and the other pairs will perform either ballroom or Latin American dance in the following weeks. The dancing stars will be judged by viewers at home and professional dance judges, **Len Goodman, Bruno Tonioli** and **Carrie Ann Inaba**.

Phone and online surveys will begin each performance show so that viewers at home can vote for their favorite dancing couple. Unlike the voting on "American Idol," the scoring is divided evenly between the judges and the viewers.

SAG Awards

BENJAMIN Bratt, Cesar Montano's co-star in "The Great Raid," and actress **Ellen Pompeo** (she's on the hit TV drama series, "Grey's Anatomy") were a welcome sight for bleary eyes at the early Thursday morning announcement of the nominations for the 12th Annual Screen Actors Guild (SAG) Awards. The awards season continues with this annual dawn trek to Pacific Design Center, lovingly known in LA as the Blue Whale (because it is blue and very big), for the televised announcement of the actors' choices of the year's finest performances on film and TV.

Benjamin and Ellen made for a glamorous pair at such an ungodly hour although Benjamin's trendy bed-head could have been for real—perhaps he did jump from bed, brushed his hair once or twice and rushed to the Blue Whale's Silver Screen Theater.

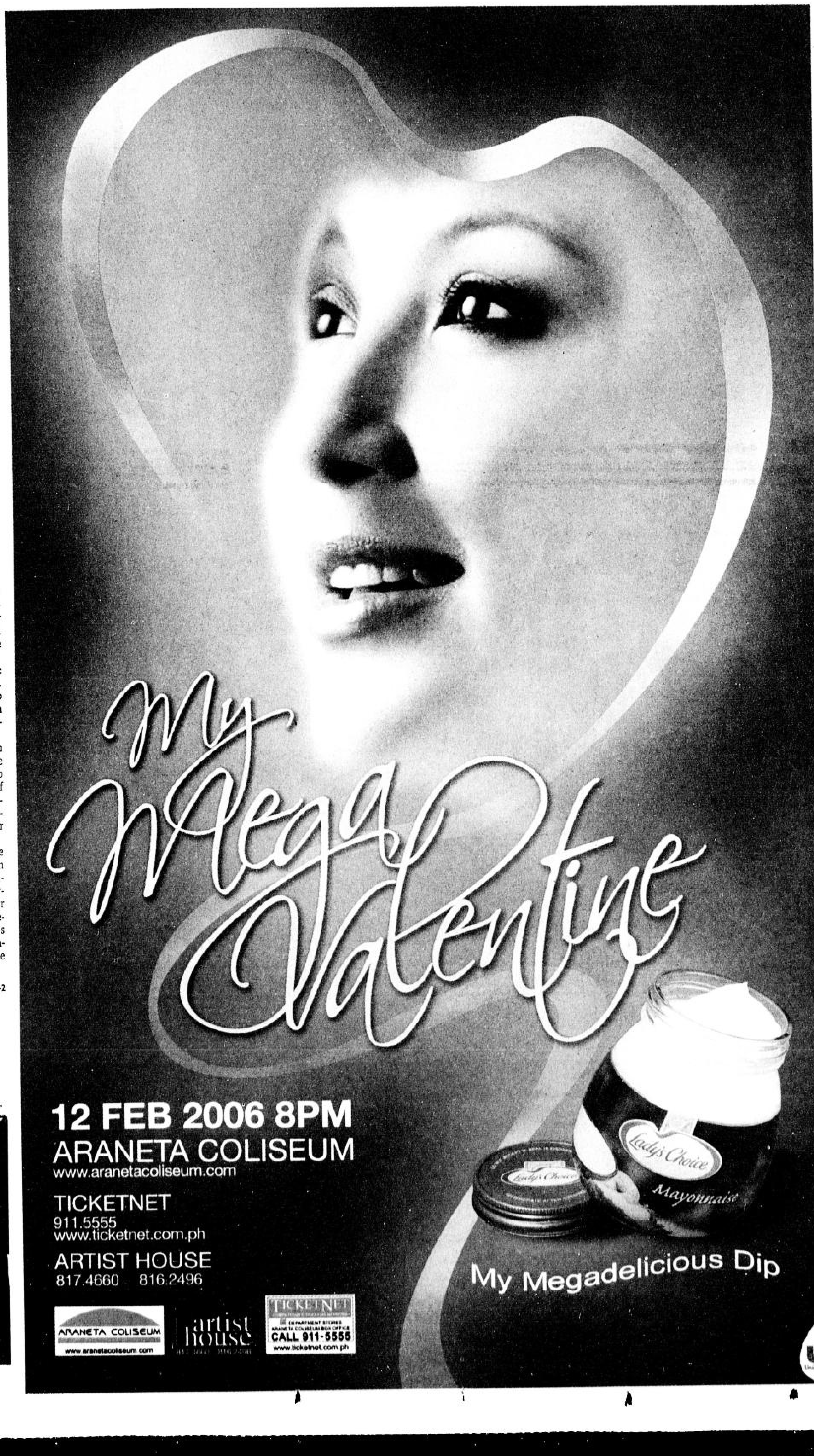
The SAG awards are significant since these honors are selected purely by actors' peers. "Brokeback Mountain" continues to pick up steam with four nominations: Actor (**Heath Ledger**), Supporting Actor (**Jake Gyllenhaal**), Actress (**Michelle Williams**) and Cast.

SAG originated the accolades for casts in movies, TV comedy and drama series. At the rate new parents Heath and Michelle keep getting nominated, the chances of both of them winning are increasing. If they do triumph simultaneously, it will be a sweet moment for the couple who are enjoying their first born, **Matilda Rose**.

Felicity Huffman duplicated her double nomination at the Golden Globes, again scoring Best Actress for film (as a transsexual in "Transamerica," she portrays a desperate father turned desperate mother) and for TV comedy series ("Desperate Housewives"). But in the latter category, Felicity's "Desperate" co-stars **Teri Hatcher, Eva Longoria** and **Marcia Cross** were left out in the SAG Awards nominations.

ACTORS/ A3-2

GEORGE Hamilton and Edyta Sliwinska



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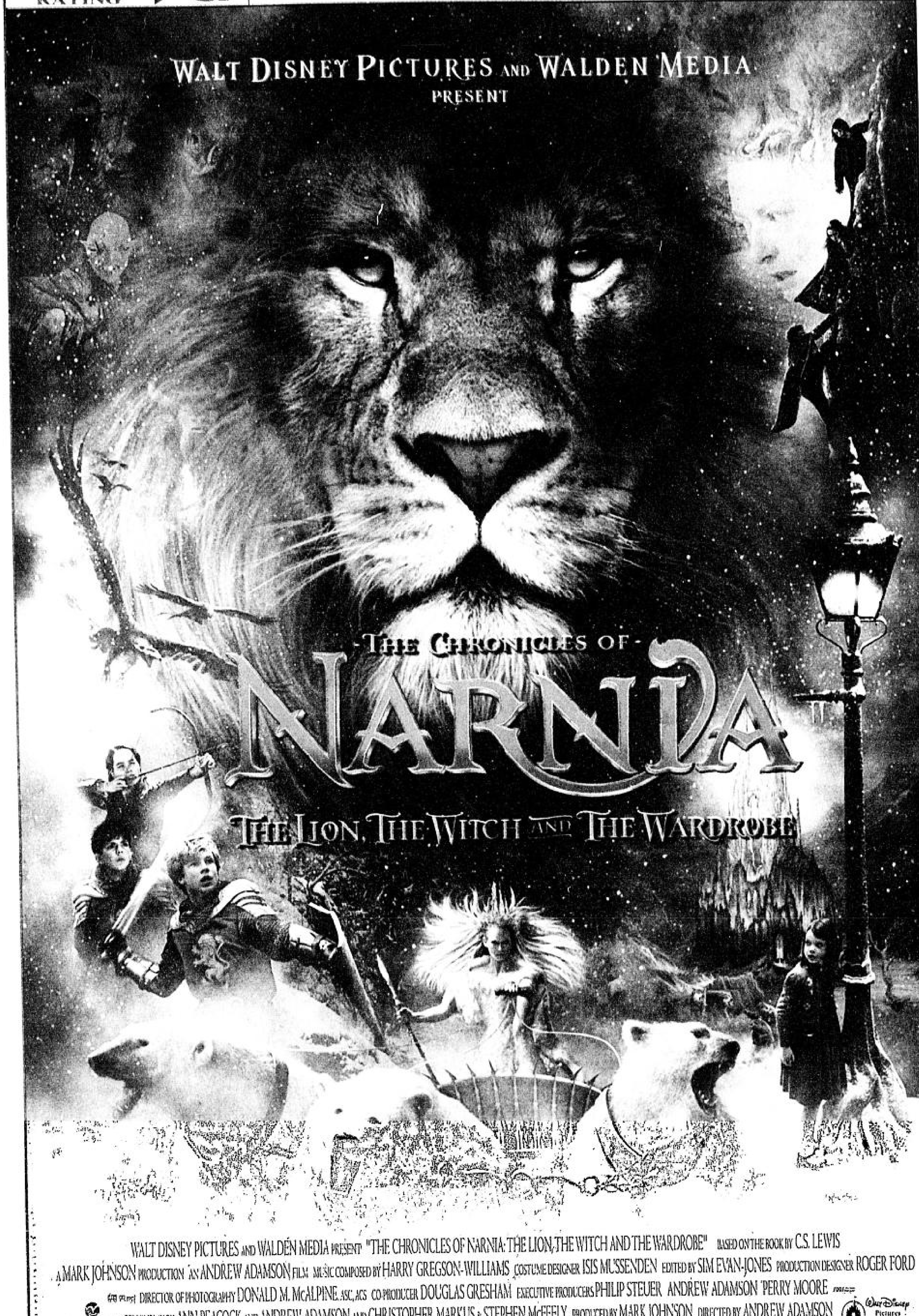
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TIA CARRERE partner Maksim Chmerkovskiy

Actors pick . . .

From page A3-1

However, the "Desperate" cast won a Best Ensemble, TV Comedy series nomination. So Felicity, as part of this show, actually has three nominations.

Chinese actress and "Memoirs of a Geisha" star **Ziyi Zhang**, who is a Golden Globe Best Actress nominee, also earned a nomination from her SAG peers. Ziyi and Felicity are vying for the bronze SAG Awards statuette against **Charlize Theron** ("North Country"), **Reese Witherspoon** ("Walk the Line") and **Judi Dench** ("Mrs. Henderson Presents").

Heath's competition for the Best Actor honors is formidable because 2005 was crowded with extremely good performances by actors. But the New York Times has dared to declare that Heath's performance as a cowboy who falls in love with a fellow ranch hand (Jake Gyllenhaal) is equal to the greatest movie performances of **Marlon Brando** and **Sean Penn**. That's a supreme compliment for Heath.

Standing in Heath's way are **Joaquin Phoenix** ("Walk the Line"), **David Strathairn** ("Good Night, and Good Luck"), **Philip Seymour Hoffman** ("Capote") and **Russell Crowe** ("Cinderella Man").

"Crash," a drama about several Los Angelenos whose lives accidentally intersect in a 24-hour period, is another movie that made a good showing this week. The film's **Matt Dillon** and **Don Cheadle** picked up Best Supporting Actor nominations and, with the rest of the ensemble (which includes **Sandra Bullock**), a Best Cast nod. "Crash" also figured in nominations from the Producers Guild of America (Best Picture) and the Directors Guild of America (Best Director, **Paul Haggis**).

Michelle's rivals in the Best Supporting Actress category are **Frances McDormand** ("North Country"), **Rachel Weisz** ("The Constant Gardener"), **Amy Adams** ("Junebug") and **Catherine Keener** ("Capote").

In the TV categories, these are the women who edged out Felicity's "Desperate" co-stars for the Best Actress, comedy series competition: **Candice Bergen** ("Boston Legal"), **Patricia Heaton** ("Everybody Loves Raymond"), **Megan Mullally** ("Will & Grace") and **Mary-Louise Parker** ("Weeds).

Ellen did not go home empty-handed. She had a SAG Award nomination (she and her "Grey's Anatomy" cast mates were cited in the Best Ensemble in a TV drama series) to show for her early wake-up effort.

If you want to bid for luxury gift collections, autographed show memorabilia and other goodies that the show's presenters will also be receiving, log on to www.sagawards.org/auction. This eBay auction will help SAG members to contribute to the literacy campaign among children. The 12th Annual Screen Actors Guild Awards will be held on Sunday evening, Jan. 29.

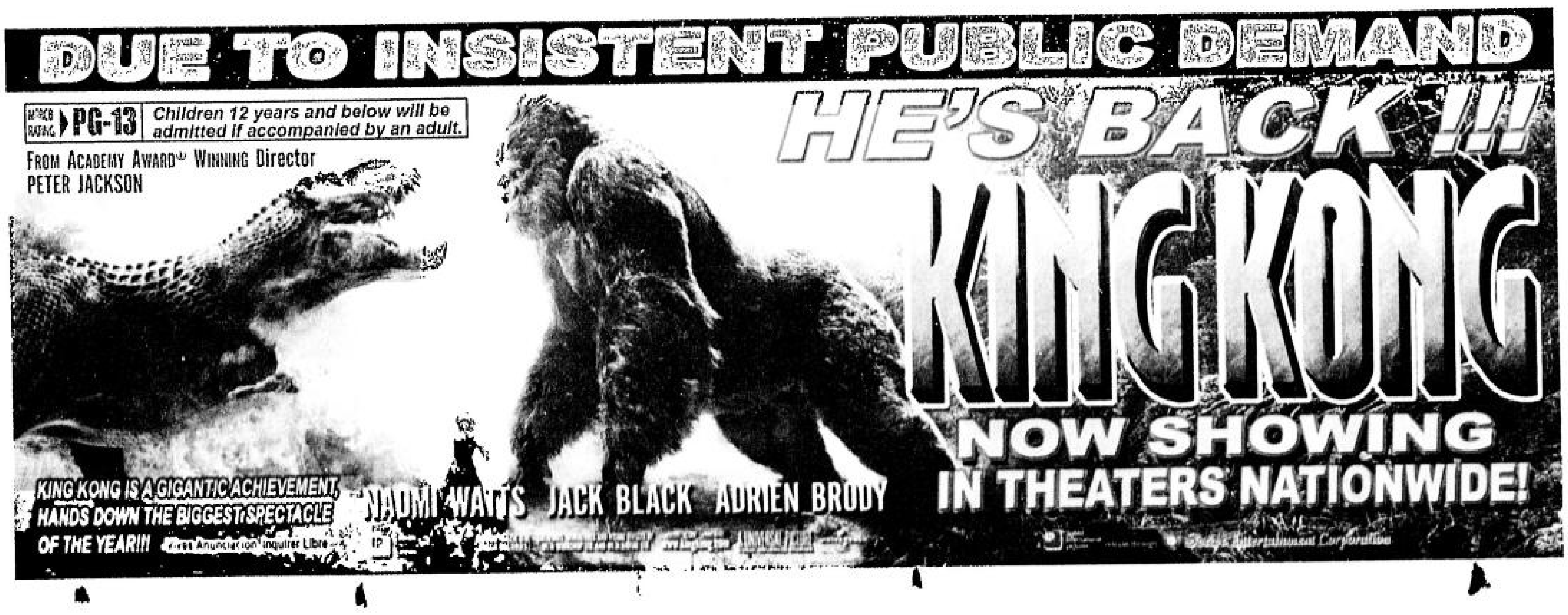
Jon who?

SOME parts of the world and even portions of the US will be wondering who **Jon Stewart** is when he hosts the 78th Annual Academy Awards in March. Jon is obviously not a household name like previous Oscar hosts **Billy Crystal, Whoopi Goldberg, Chris Rock** and **Steve Martin.**

But Jon, who is described as "cerebral" and whose humor is branded as "sarcastic, sardonic and incisive" has a following in Hollywood's liberal community. It is said that directors love to appear in his award-winning "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart."

A report disclosed that when Columbia Journalism Review published a list of 20 journalists who did excellent coverage during the Bush/Kerry presidential election, Jon placed fourth, ahead of reporters of The New York Times, the Washington Post and other prestigious publications. Darn. I guess no "Uma, Oprah, Uma, Oprah" jokes from this Jon guy.

E-mail the columnist at rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com.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ABS-CBN

Dahil mahal namin kayo,
Kapamilya!

The secret life of Laurence Olivier

LOS ANGELES—THE TITLE OF THE book begins on the back cover with the bold red letters: O L I. On the spine is another letter, V. The front cover continues with I E R, under a photo of a brooding, young Laurence Olivier.

The ostentatious look of a new, authorized biography of a man considered to be one of the greatest actors of the 20th century seems fitting. In theater, films and television, Olivier commanded the stage and screen in everything from "Hamlet" to "The Prince and the Showgirl" with Marilyn Monroe.

"Olivier" is the result of four years of scholarship by Terry Coleman, an English journalist, novelist and historian. He had two advantages over other biographers of the actor: He interviewed Olivier many times as a correspondent for the Guardian of London and had access to Olivier's collection of letters and other memorabilia.

"Olivier in his last years kept all his papers in great big stage hampers in a barn at his country place in Sussex," Coleman said from his London home. "He was a bit dismissive about them, and at one point he said, 'Get the gardener to burn them.'"

Almost forgotten

The gardener didn't burn them, but after Olivier's death, the papers were forgotten and subject to the damp English winters. After five years, the family realized the value of the collection, which included business letters, love letters, contracts, cast lists and other items. They were entrusted to the British Library.

The estate's executors chose Coleman to write the official Olivier biography. They were impressed by "The Nelson Touch," Coleman's biography of the British naval hero, Admiral Horatio Nelson. Olivier had portrayed Nelson in the 1940 made-in-Hollywood "That Hamilton Woman," with his future wife, Vivien Leigh, in the title role.

WITH wife Vivien Leigh in the 1940s. They were married to others before they wed.

The romance of Olivier and Leigh was widely publicized, especially since both were married to others. They obtained divorces and married in 1940. The marriage lasted 20 years.

"Vivien was quite mad," Coleman cited as the reason for the breakup. "It's a sad story. At the time, nobody ever realized that Vivien Leigh was quite as mad as she was. She died in 1967, and it came out in about 1980 that she had in her last years been a manic-depressive.

"But what nobody knew ... was that she was mad as early as when she was filming 'Gone With the Wind.' She was quite dreadful to work with because she wouldn't turn up and she was terribly nervous on the set. During the filming, she actually took an overdose."

Olivia de Havilland, the sole surviving star of "Gone With the Wind," disputes this.

"Vivien was impeccably professional, impeccably disciplined on 'Gone With the Wind,'" de Havilland said from her home in Paris.

Great writer

Plowing through the mass of correspondence, the author discovered that Olivier was a great letter writer. Starting in his late 20s, he kept the letters written to him and made carbon copies of his replies. When he was directing Leigh in the London debut of "A Streetcar Named Desire," Olivier realized the play was too American for British audiences. He sent a 32-page, handwritten letter to Tennessee Williams suggesting changes. The playwright was so astonished that he authorized the revisions.

Coleman devotes a seven-page author's note at the end of the "Olivier" text to the matter of "The Androgynous Actor." He considered various reports that Olivier was bisexual. One biography printed after his death alleged that Olivier "was deeply involved in a homosexual affair with Danny Kaye."

Documents salvaged from a barn included business and love letters, and proof of a homosexual affair

"This sort of thing is very difficult to check," Coleman said in the interview. "I did check it and talked to a number of people. In this mountain of material in the archives I could not find a hint of an affair with Danny Kaye. His third wife (Joan Plowright) had no inkling of it, and I believe her.

"What I did find was evidence of a homosexual affair in 1937 with an actor called Henry Ainley. He was a big name of the 1910s and 1920s. I'm not sure this is a terribly important thing. It's there and it's a fact and therefore I report it."

The author declared he found no other evidence about Olivier's bisexuality. In his 1982 autobiography, Olivier hinted at a homosexual "dalliance," Coleman writes, prompting readers to assume that the "one male" had been Noel Coward. The author considers Ainley more likely.

During the last 22 years of Olivier's life, Coleman said, he was ill "with an awful succession of diseases." (Olivier died July 11, 1989, at 82.)

"He insisted on acting as long as he could," said the biographer. "When he could no longer direct, he acted in films, mostly in cameo parts at $1 million apiece. When he couldn't stand the trip to Hollywood, he made two terrific television films in England—'Brideshead Revisited' and 'King Lear.'"

Bob Thomas, AP

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FEEDBACK

Love it

From Gerry Santos, 64 East Madison Avenue, Dumont, New Jersey, USA, via e-mail:

Ruben Nepales' column is the first item I read on INQ.7.net. I love his style. If he has published any books, please let me know. I'd love to own a copy.

We'll tell him.—Ed.

Cheers

From Letty of Makati City, via text message:

I love the quotes chosen for Nepales' "Most fascinating interviews of 2005." I should go back to reading the full text of each of them.

Thanks

From Matt Eclarinal,. 17 Waterdam Rd Gordon Heights, Olongapo City, via e-mail:

It's the first time I am commenting about an article in a newspaper or any published story for that matter ... but I just can't help giving a good word about "Less Stress on Starstruck." Thank you [Nestor U. Torre, Viewfinder] for noticing the type of stress those kids are encountering... and pls follow it up, in case the show continues to put so much burden on those kids. It's really better to highlight their talents than their weakness.

Yes to OPM

From Ricci Santiago, Saudi Arabia, via e-mail:

I hereby support the government's plan for an all OPM radio station. OPM makes Pinoys abroad like us proud.

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2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

TILDA Swinton steals every moment.

Impressive visual overload

'Chronicles of Narnia' is a rollicking work of pure escapism

REVIEW

LOS ANGELES—LIKE ITS cousin, J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Lord of the Rings," C.S. Lewis' "The Chronicles of Narnia" was left to ferment for decades while movie technology caught up with the fantastic imaginations of the two British authors.

That's a good thing. Twenty years ago, or even 10, "The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" probably would have been filled with silly Muppet-like creatures rather than the dazzling computer-generated animals in Disney's epic adaptation.

As it is, despite their photo-realism, the digitally created talking animals sometimes do look silly. By the time all the leopards, rhinoceroses and rodents under the sun join the climactic battle sequences, you may be tired enough of these varmints to wonder whether Noah really needed to put two of *every* species on his Ark.

Still, the visual overload is truly impressive—not quite on the order of Peter Jackson's "Lord of the Rings" trilogy, but close. And dramatically, director Andrew Adamson (one of the directors on the first two "Shrek" movies) spins Lewis' fantasy classic with a well-defined, recognizable underpinning of sibling rivalry that could have easily taken place in the real world.

Positively insane

Add in Tilda Swinton, who is positively insane as the vile White Witch of mythical Narnia, along with winsome performances from four young unknown stars, and the film amounts to a rollicking work of pure escapism definitely worth your time and money.

Adapted from the first installment of Lewis' seven-part chronicle, "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" opens during the London Blitz. The mother of the four Pevensie children is so worried about the Luftwaffe bombings that she farms the kids out to the country home of an eccentric professor (Jim Broadbent, in a tiny but colorful role).

There, the children tumble through the looking glass—or rather, a piece of furniture filled with musty old coats—into Narnia, an exotic domain where animals speak, unicorns and centaurs cavort and the witch Jadis (Swinton) has declared herself queen, casting the land into perpetual winter.

The Pevensies—eldest boy Peter (William Moseley), oldest sister Susan (Anna Popplewell), second brother Edmund (Skandar Keynes) and young Lucy (Georgie Henley)—are viewed by he inhabitants of this not-so-peaceable kingdom as the prophesied saviors of Narnia.

Christ symbol?

As such, the kids are targeted for elimination by Jadis and her gang of snarling wolves, while the forces of good that follow the Lion (voiced by Liam Neeson) revere the Pevensies as demigods. Among the cast highlights is James McAvoy as the faun Tumnus, a hooved forest dweller who befriends Lucy.

Lewis' Lion has been interpreted as a representation of Christ, and the story certainly can be read as a New Testament fable. Yet it does not go beyond symbolism, and the film never turns remotely preachy.

Hearing Neeson's resonant but familiar voice come out of a lion's mouth is occasionally jarring. Other key vocal talents are more unobtrusive for their relative unfamiliarity, among them Ray Winstone and Dawn French as kindly Mr. and Mrs. Beaver, Rupert Everett as the wily Mr. Fox and Sim Evan-Jones as Wolf, Jadis' foul lieutenant.

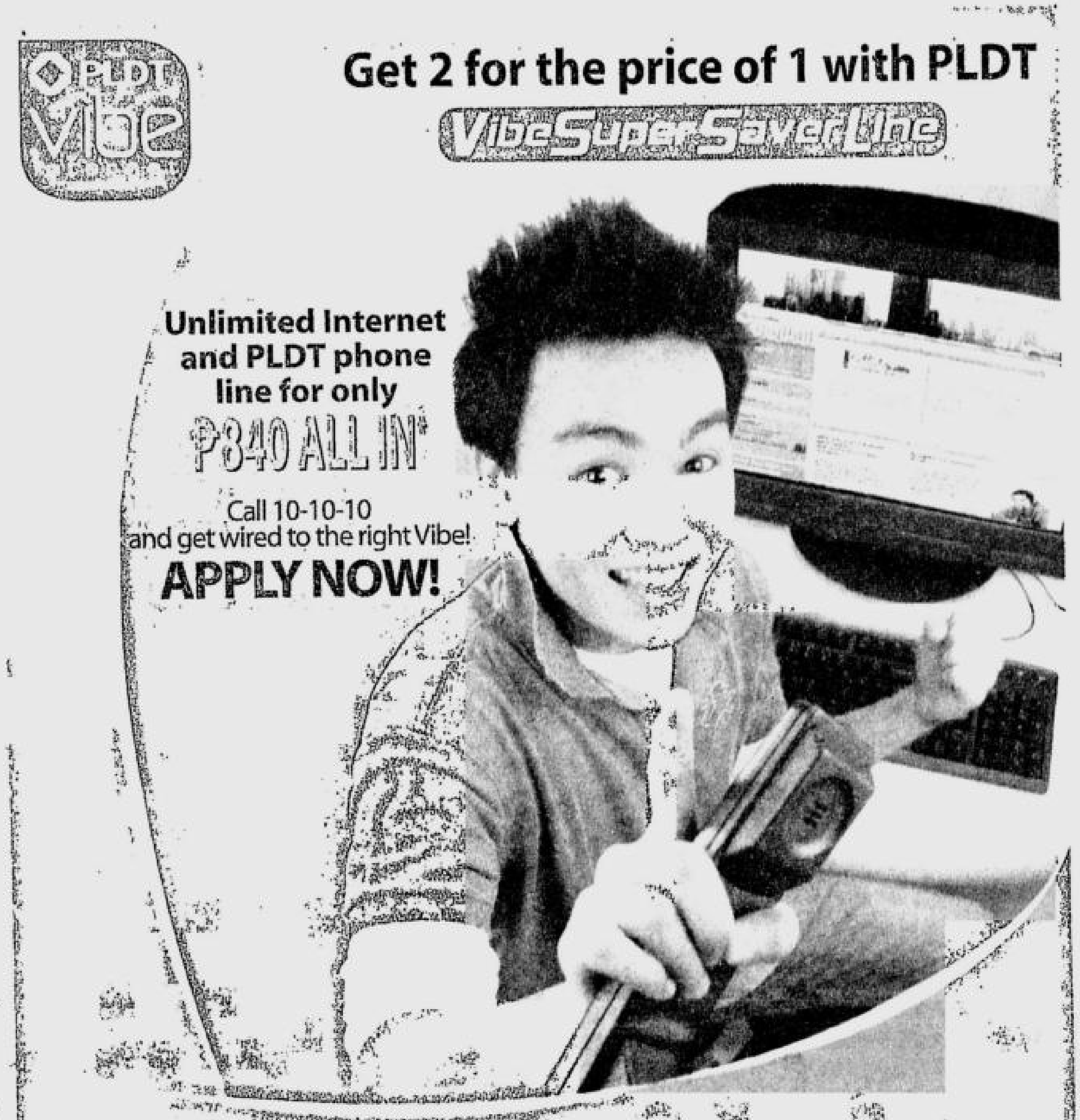
Swinton steals every moment, deftly blending seductress and crone in a single package. Her sincerity overcomes outrageous attire that has her looking like a vengeful Valkyrie in one scene, a woman with a giant icicle on her head in another.

Her intensity—along with battle scenes and episodes of peril generated by Wolf and his pack—push the bounds of the movie's PG rating. Parents with small children should note that the film is potentially at least as unnerving as "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire," which received a PG-13 rating.

The movie ends on a thoughtful note of whimsy, although the filmmakers toss in two stylistically inappropriate songs by Alanis Morissette and Tim Finn over the closing credits, along with an unnecessary, unsatisfying epilogue after the initial cast credits that should have been relegated to the deleted scenes on the DVD.

Of course, the epilogue hints of more to come in the land of Narnia, so fans are not likely to complain.

David Germain, AP



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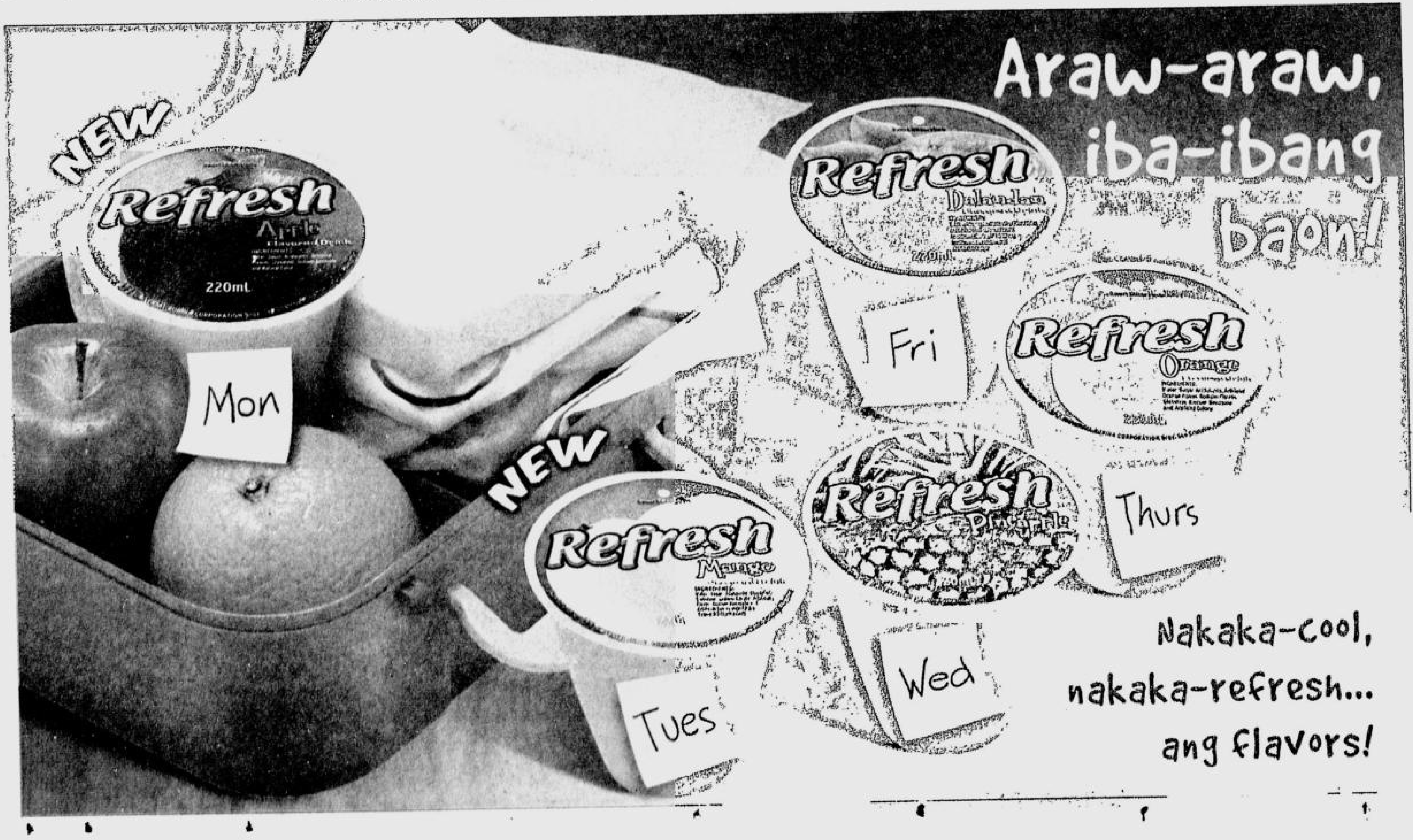

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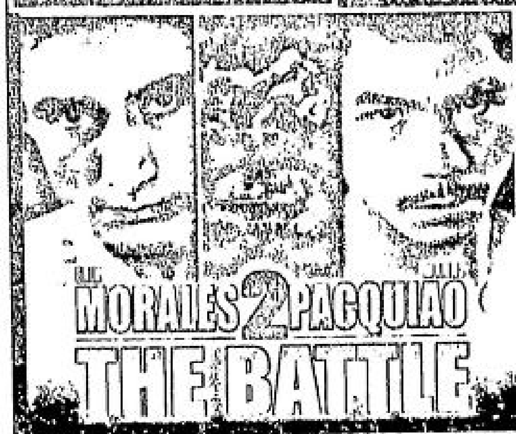

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Erik "El Terrible" Morales
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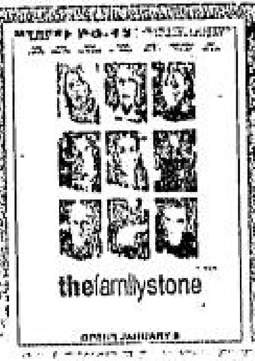
movietime SCHEDULE AND EVENTS

Don't Give Up On Us
Abby, an executive and Vince, an aspiring singer meet and unexpectedly fall in love in the lush scenery of Baguio and Sagada

Saint Ange
A young cleaning lady tasked to clean the abandoned St. Ange orphanage discovers horror lurking within



The Family Stone
A high powered New Yorker lady meets her boyfriend's bohemian family and tries to fit in with mixture of awkwardness, confusion, and hostility

GUARANTEED SEATS

THE PODIUM 633-8976
1 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
11:00FS/11:15MF/02:30/05:45
08:30LFS/09:00LMF/11:45END
2 KING KONG
12:40FS/01:10MF/04:50
08:00LFS/08:30LMF/11:40END

MEGAMALL
1 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
10:05FS/10:15MF/01:30/04:45
07:30LFS/08:00LMF/10:45END

CEBU (032) 231-3876
1 KING KONG
10:50FS/11:00MF/02:30/06:00
09:10LFS/09:30LMF/12:35END
THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
10:15FS/10:20MF/01:10/04:00/06:50
09:25LFS/09:40LMF/12:15END
ENTENG KABISOTE 2
11:20FS/11:30MF/01:30/03:30/05:30/07:30
09:20LFS/09:30LMF/11:20END

MANILA
6 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
10:15FS/10:30MF/01:15/04:00/06:45
09:10LFS/09:30LMF/11:55END

METRO MANILA

SM MEGAMALL
THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 EXODUS
4 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
5 FAMILY STONE
6 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
7 ST. ANGE
8 AKO LEGAL WIFE
9 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
10 KING KONG
11 MULAWINTHE MOVIE
12 BLUE MOON

SM CITY STA. MESA
THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
3 KING KONG
4 AKO LEGAL WIFE
5 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
6 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
7 FAMILY STONE
8 EXODUS
9 BLUE MOON
10 ST. ANGE

SM CITY BICUTAN
1 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
DON'T GIVE UP ON US
ENTENG KABISOTE 2
4 KING KONG

SM VALENZUELA
THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
ENTENG KABISOTE 2
3 KING KONG
4 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
1 MULAWINTHE MOVIE
2 ST. ANGE
3 KING KONG
4 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
5 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
6 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
7 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
8 EXODUS
9 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
10 FAMILY STONE
11 RESERVED
12 RESERVED

SM CITY SOUTHMALL
1 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 KING KONG
4 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
5 EXODUS
6 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
AKO LEGAL WIFE
8 ST. ANGE
9 FAMILY STONE
10 RESERVED

SM SUPERCENTER SUCAT
1 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
2 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
4 FAMILY STONE
5 EXODUS
6 AKO LEGAL WIFE
7 ST. ANGE
8 KING KONG

SM CITY MANILA
1 KING KONG
2 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
3 SHAKE, RATTLE & ROLL 2K5
4 EXODUS
5 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
6 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
7 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
8 FAMILY STONE
9 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
10 AKO LEGAL WIFE
11 BLUE MOON
12 ST. ANGE

SM SAN LAZARO
THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
2 FAMILY STONE
3 KING KONG
4 BLUE MOON
5 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
6 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

LUZON

SM CITY PAMPANGA
1 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
AKO LEGAL WIFE
KING KONG
4 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
5 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
6 ENTENG KABISOTE 2

SM CITY BAGUIO
1 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
2 KING KONG
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 ENTENG KABISOTE 2

SM MOLINO
THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
2 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
KING KONG
4 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

SM CITY BACOOR
1 ST. ANGE
2 FAMILY STONE
3 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
4 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
5 KINGM KONG
6 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
7 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
9 EXODUS

SM CITY MARILAO
1 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
4 KING KONG

SM CITY DASMARINAS
1 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
2 EXODUS
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 ENTENG KABISOTE 2

SM CITY LUCENA
1 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
2 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
3 KING KONG
4 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

SM CITY BATANGAS
1 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
3 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
4 EXODUS

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU
KING KONG
2 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
4 AKO LEGAL WIFE
5 BLOOD FIST
6 EXODUS
7 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
8 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA

SM CITY ILOILO
1 EXODUS
2 MULAWIN THE MOVIE
3 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
4 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
5 HE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
6 KING KONG
7 BLOOD FIST
8 AKO LEGAL WIFE

SM CITY DAVAO
1 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
2 KING KONG
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 EXODUS
5 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
6 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
1 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
2 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
3 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
4 BLUE MOON

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KING KONG PG13 11:00,2:40,6:20,10:00
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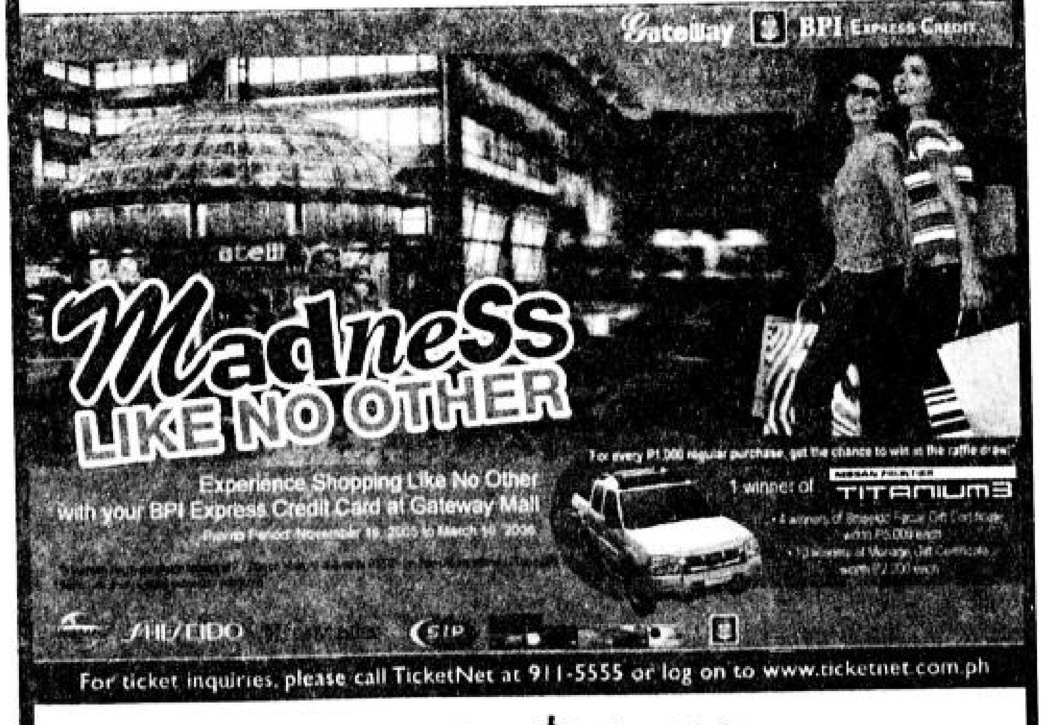
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3 KING KONG 1:10 / 4:50 / 8:30
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Rapid gifts and other Christmas booboos

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

HOST: WHAT WAS YOUR CHRISTMAS EVE like?

Guest: Hectic! I had to spend hours wrapping rapid gifts!

(What in the world are rapid gifts?)

* * *

Host: What is your message to our viewers this Christmas?

Guest: We should do all we can in order to bring love and other Christmas landmarks into fore!

(What *is* he saying?)

* * *

Host: Have you been to the Christmas street in Mandaluyong?

Guest: Yes, it's great—that street where beautiful Christmas decorations every year!

(*May kulang yata* ...)

* * *

Host: Your wish for the New Year?

Guest: *Sana, magkaroon tayo ng* peace and happy!

(Well, it's the thought that counts ...)

* * *

Host: Will your family be complete this Christmas?

Guest: *Lahat kami, kumpleto. Pero, isang* brother *ko, wala.*

(Make up your mind!)

* * *

Host: Your wishes for your wife?

Guest: Honey, I hope you're the best!

(You mean, you aren't sure?)

* * *

Host: Your wish for your father who's in prison?

Guest: *Sana, makalayas siya kaagad.*

(*Ay, makalayas!*)

* * *

Host: Do you dress up for the holidays?

Guest: Of course, especially for Christmas and New Year—you always have to look your bets!

(*Ay*, look your bets!)

* * *

Host: How do you celebrate Christmas?

Guest: I pray and do good to others. That's how I celibate Christmas.

(—Such self-control!)

* * *

Host: What about you?

Guest: *Ako rin, mahilig ako mag*-religious *sa Pasko.*

(*Ano daw?*)

* * *

Host: What about helping the poor?

Guest: Also, but not outright giveaways. Provide education and loans for small businesses, that's the best we can did for them.

(Too bad, you were doing so well ...)

* * *

Host: Where do you like to spend Christmas when you're not in the Philippines?

Guest: Oh, *pinakamaganda mag*-Christmas *sa* New York—*puwede kang mag*-ice-skating *sa* Times Square!

(You must mean Rockefeller Plaza!)

'Eight Below'

INSPIRED by a true story, "Eight Below" is an exciting tale of loyalty and friendship set in the extreme wilderness of Antarctica.

In the new action-adventure production, three members of a scientific expedition—Jerry (**Paul Walker**), his best friend (**Jason Biggs**) and a rugged geologist (**Bruce Greenwood**) are forced to leave behind their team of beloved sled dogs due to an accident and perilous weather conditions.

During the harsh Antarctic winter, the dogs must struggle for survival in the frozen wilderness for over six months, until a rescue mission can be mounted.

The film is inspired by a 1957 Japanese expedition to Antarctica, which served as the basis for the blockbuster Japanese movie, "Nankyoku Monogatari."

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2 The Chronicles of NARNIA
3 ST. ANGE
4 THE FAMILY STONE
5 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
6 KING KONG
7 BLUE MOON
8 EXODUS
9 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
10 AKO LEGAL WIFE

ERMITA
536-7809 to 12

1 The Chronicles of NARNIA
2 AKO LEGAL WIFE
BLUE MOON
3 ST. ANGE
4 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
EXODUS
5 DON'T GIVE UP ON US
6 THE FAMILY STONE
7 KING KONG

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1 KING KONG
2 THE FAMILY STONE
3 The Chronicles OF NARNIA
4 ST. ANGE
5 ENTENG KABISOTE 2
6 EXODUS
7 The Chronicles OF NARNIA
8 DON'T GIVE UP ON US

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1 KING KONG
2 The Chronicles OF NARNIA
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G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 FAMILY STONE	2 DON'T GIVE UP ON US	3 THX THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 KING KONG	5 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA	6 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA	7 THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA
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GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 KING KONG GUARANTEED SEATS	4 FAMILY STONE GUARANTEED SEATS	5 DON'T GIVE UP ON US GUARANTEED SEATS	
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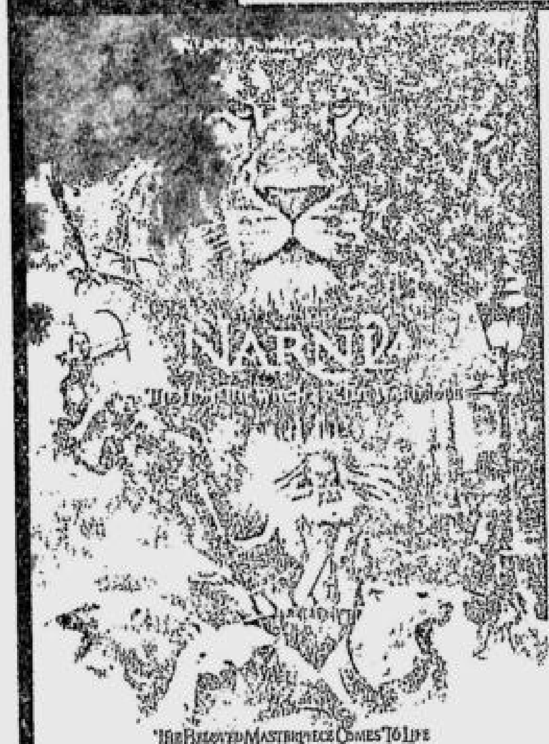
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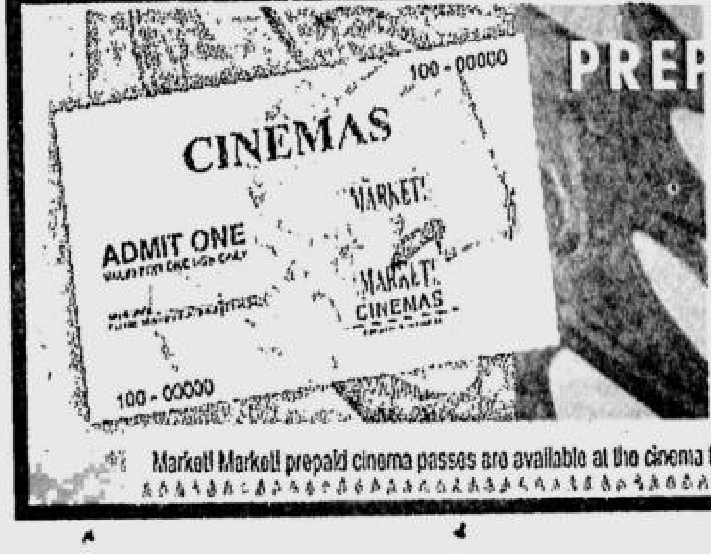

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Who they'd do 'it' with

PIOLO and Robin: Director's choices

By Nini Valera

JUDY ANN SANTOS WOULD get naked with Richard Gere.

Direk Joyce Bernal would do it with Piolo Pascual, Aga Mulach, Cesar Montano or Robin Padilla, in no particular order of preference.

But Piolo Pascual, Juday's co-star in Star Cinema's first film for 2006, refused to answer the question tossed by an entertainment reporter to the cast and director of "Don't Give Up on Us" during the press con last Wednesday.

The question: "With whom would you like to sin?"

It was a take on one of Juday's lines in the movie, in which she asked Piolo if he would sin with her.

"I don't think it's appropriate for me to answer that," said Piolo.

He is a Born Again Christian, Juday explained for the actor, who was romantically once linked to her.

That the two got naked in the movie was a matter of course, said Piolo, owing to their maturity as a love team.

"In our previous movies, we had torrid kissing scenes and *pa*-cute moments," Piolo said. "We've outgrown that, and now we're giving the audience the experience of love on a mature level. We're dealing here with two people who have committed the mistakes of youth and are now ready to make serious life decisions."

The Piolo-Juday love team has spawned three "*kilig*" movies. The love team fizzled out when they got busy with other projects and got involved with other partners.

Piolo earlier admitted that it was not easy for him to return to the screen with Juday as his lover. He also said he had regrets about not pursuing her for real.

"Now that she's with somebody else, I'm happy for her," he said, referring to Ryan Agoncillo, with whom Juday is having "a good vibe."

He said he did not want a personal relationship with his screen partner to get in the way of their working relationship: "People would then jump into whatever we have and ruin everything. I don't want that. It's best that we respect each other—as friends."

Piolo confided that at 29, he's ready to get married and settle down. "But you know what?" he said, "I haven't found the right girl."

JUDY Ann picks Richard Gere

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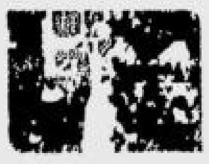

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Sunday BIZ

Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

UP grad has grand plan for engineering school

REYNALDO B. Vea in his office at Mapua.

VEA speaking before students at the UP Arts and Science Theater, 1971

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

THE YUCHENGCO group took over the Mapua Institute of Technology in 1999 with the thought of undertaking dramatic changes at the famed engineering and architecture school to bring it to a higher level.

FIRST JOB

To do so would require a person at the helm of the institute who can see these changes through, and the group believes it found the right man for the job in Dr. Reynaldo B. Vea.

Vea, after all, has a long and enviable track record of meeting challenges head-on and coming out ahead.

Fortunately for the Yuchengco group, Vea immediately said yes to the offer made in 1999 for him to head the school.

"I thought it would be a good challenge to head a school like Mapua that has contributed a lot to national development," Vea tells SundayBiz in an interview.

Many people have asked him why he—a magna cum laude mechanical engineering graduate of the University of the Philippines, and former dean of the UP College of Engineering—would fly the coop, so to speak, and settle at Mapua.

Why not, he replies.

According to Vea, he has long ago shed the vestiges of parochialism and mindset that giving back means being limited to UP, even if the country's premier state university continues to wield a strong influence on his person.

Vea was valedictorian of the first batch of graduates of the Philippine Science High School when he entered UP in 1969. He took up mechanical engineering because he wanted to go into ship building.

"How can you go wrong with ship building in a country with 7,000 islands?" he says.

Academics, however, soon took a backseat as Vea, like many UP students at that time, became a political activist, taking part in the First Quarter Storm.

"It would be very difficult for any student at that time not to be involved," Vea explains. "It was the height of the anti-Vietnam war protest movement and there was suppression of human rights. So what is a freshman to do but become involved."

He was active in student organizations such as the Samahang Demokratiko ng mga Kabataan. He also became editor-in-chief of the Philippine Collegian, the UP campus paper, and councilor of the UP Student Council. He even ran for the chairmanship of the council, but lost.

Such involvement, however, did not go unnoticed.

In 1973, the 19-year-old was supposed to attend a student meeting when he was greeted at the door by military personnel. The men took him to Fort Bonifacio where he would be locked up for the next 20 months.

He came out of Fort Bonifacio more focused and with idealism still burning in his heart. Prison time only served to stoke the fire.

Still passionate, Vea went back to UP. But he admitted that he suffered a bit of a culture shock when he saw that many of his fellow students were younger than he was, while a number of his professors used to be his former classmates.

He struggled through and, in October 1977, he finally got his degree to the delight of his friends and family.

Soon, he was earning his own money—P700 a month—as a professor at the UP Engineering Sciences department.

Teaching, he said, was something he had always wanted to do. He went about teaching for two years before he left for the US to take his Masters degree in Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Vea went back to teaching after getting his Master's degree in 1981, but he left again to get his doctorate in Engineering as a Fulbright-Hays Scholar at the University of California at Berkeley in 1991.

He could have stayed on in the US, something which many of his contemporaries did. But he says that going back to the Philippines to serve was always his intent.

UP GRAD/ B2

JERVIS Tinimbang learned by playing.

Young stock market hotshot learns skills from PSE game

WHEN JERVIS TINIMBANG joined an online Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) trading game two years ago, he just wanted to have fun playing with P1 million in "virtual" or make-believe money.

But the PSE's computerized and real-time game, called Stock Trading Tournament (STT), was so realistic and the insights Tinimbang gained so valuable that he decided to make a career out of what he learned.

From playing with make-believe money, Tinimbang now helps manage multimillion-peso dealer accounts as an investment officer of First Metro Investment Corp., (First Metro), the investment house subsidiary of Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co. Inc.

First Metro is making money out of Tinimbang's calls but—like a real pro—Tinimbang does not want to give an exact figure of First Metro's return for its dealer accounts.

"But we are sure we beat the Phisix [Philippine Composite Index] for our dealer accounts," he says.

First Metro dealer accounts, thus, chalked up a return of over 15 percent as the Phisix, which is the barometer of all stock price movements at the PSE, grew by that much last year.

Beating the Phisix in a sense makes the 22-year-old Tinimbang an up-and-coming stock market hotshot, but his performance does not come as a surprise for PSE people who watched him play at the STT as a student.

Based on data from the PSE, Tinimbang won third place, when he joined the inaugural run of the annual STT in 2003, while he was still a 20-year-old De La Salle University management student.

While he did not grab the top price, the honor was enough to further whet Tinimbang's appetite for the real thing.

"I would like to continue doing stock trading, and I feel that I wouldn't get tired of doing this," he says.

Tinimbang's achievement and enthusiasm have attracted the attention of Francis Lim, PSE president and chief executive officer.

Lim described the young investment officer as "an inspiration to more Filipinos, especially young people who also wish to explore the stock market."

Tinimbang's accomplishment has reinforced Lim's resolve to continue with the stock market game, which the PSE launched three years ago to promote stock market investments.

"Tinimbang is proof that the STT indeed helps people sharpen their stock market skills," Lim says. "I am convinced many students out there will follow the footsteps of Jervis whose passion for stock market investing opened a career in the stock brokerage business."

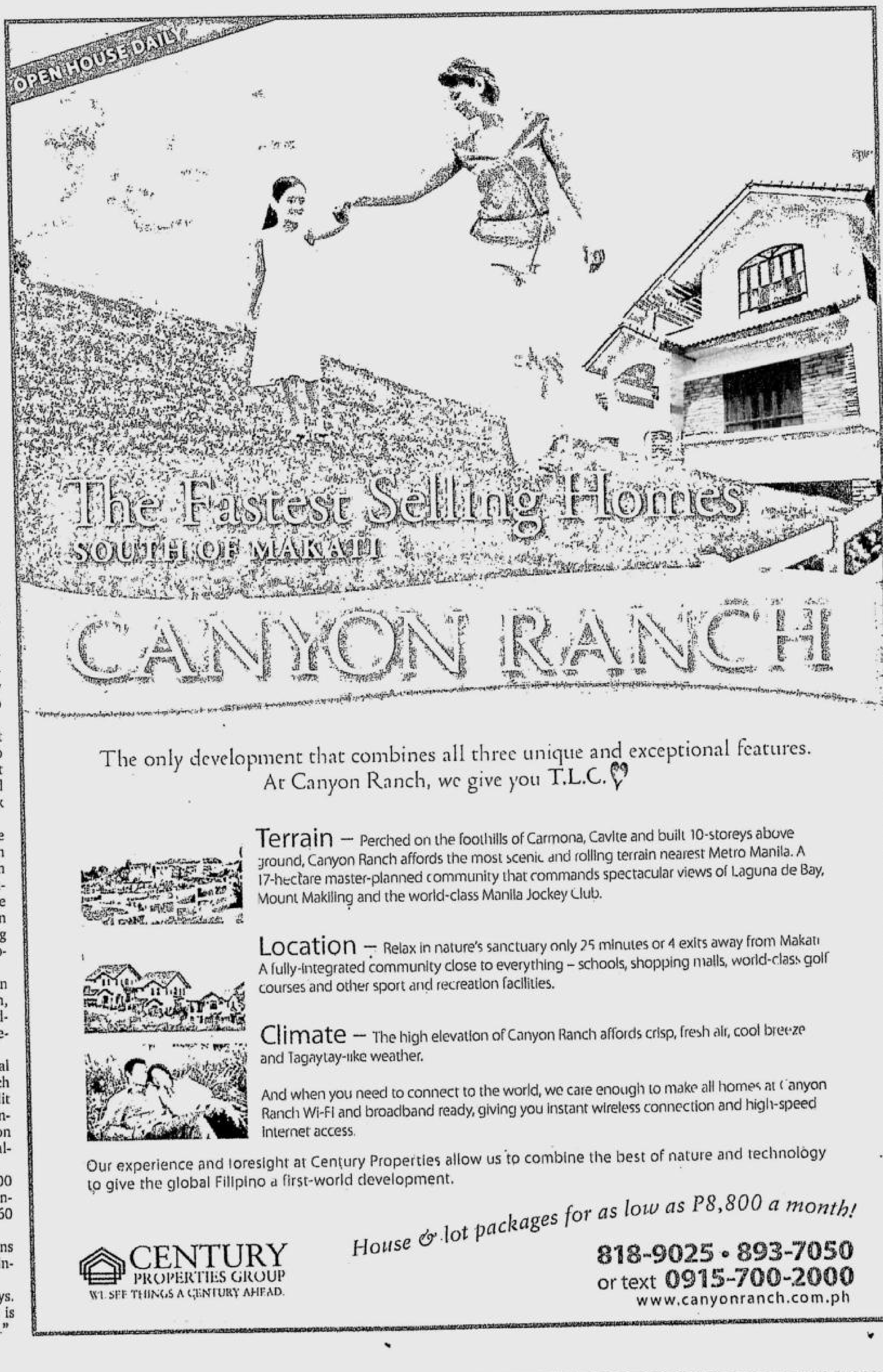
The online PSE tilt, which can be accessed at www.pse.com.ph, offers players a real-world trading experience to help them predict market behavior.

At the start of the third annual tournament last Oct. 28, each player was given a virtual credit of P1 million as initial play money. Their rankings are based on the player's virtual portfolio value.

Rewards, including a P15,000 top prize and trophies, await winners in January at the end of 60 days of simulated trading.

As to Tinimbang, he remains passionate about his job as an investment adviser.

"This is my passion," he says. "To be paid to do what I love is truly a dream come true for me."



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ADB starts greening its roof decks

IN ITS EFFORT TO PROMOTE and achieve the objectives of ISO 14001 in the workplace, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) started to green the roof decks of ADB headquarters.

The roof gardens are designed to provide greenery on the building's flat roofs and put the bare space to good use and introduce the concept of roof gardens.

Wood scraps were also reused as plant boxes. The roof deck is an ideal place for the plants to get sunlight while serving as excellent air filters to help reduce smog and cool the air particularly in the country's tropical climate. ADB's ISO secretariat, in support of ISO objectives, is leading earth-friendly initiatives to increase the awareness and involvement of ADB's employees in helping reduce the institution's "environmental footprint."

Last November, ADB passed its ISO second year surveillance and maintained its ISO 14001 and OHSAS 18001 certification during an audit conducted by TUV. It confirms that ADB's environment, health and safety management system complies with the two international standards on environmental management and occupational health and safety.

ISO 14001 is an international standard that specifies requirements for environmental management systems. Certification signifies a commitment to prevent, control and manage the impacts of an organization's activities, products and services on the environment in areas it can control.

ADB received ISO 14001/OHSAS 18001 certification last November 2003, becoming the first and only multilateral development bank to obtain certification in the international standards on environmental and occupational health and safety management systems.

The standards outline ways of cutting back on wastewater discharge and air emissions from generators, improving waste management and handling of hazardous materials, and boosting emergency preparedness and response.

In the first year of ISO implementation, ADB was able to reduce its paper consumption in half. But the Philippine-based multilateral development bank (MDB) continues to find ways to promote environment-friendly practices in the workplace.

ADB's Office of Administrative Services (OAS) introduced an e-campaign on saving paper called "Earth-Friendly Printing." The initiative encourages all ADB staff to save paper when printing by following simple and quick printing tips.

"Any office with an effective environmental management system deserves the highest commendation for making the commitment to be different. All of us can contribute significantly in efforts to protect the environment from further degradation," said OAS principal director Robert Dawson.

He added that while ADB has long advocated environmental management and sustainable development in its projects, "It is equally important for all ADB staff to 'walk the talk' and take part in a serious effort to green our offices. This, I believe, is the best way to demonstrate ADB's corporate environmental responsibility."

RP needs to brush up on English

By Ronnel W. Domingo

UNLESS steps are taken to improve English proficiency, RP may lose call center jobs to other countries.

BUSINESS PROCESS OUTSOURCING and call center firms, touted as the country's sunshine industry for the past few years, may be losing some steam as the supply of qualified workers is drying up.

According to the John F. Kennedy Center Foundation-Philippines, less than three of every 100 fresh college graduates are hired in the BPO/CC industry a year.

JFKCF-P is a unit of a United States-based think tank and it did a study that showed the declining supply of qualified workers in the sector could arrest the growth of the $10-billion industry.

JFKCF-P president Jim Santiago says industry data show that of the 400,000 new graduates who look for work yearly, only 11,526 or 2.89 percent were qualified for BPO and call center jobs.

"Most job applicants fail (competitive qualifying examinations for BPO/CC work) because they did not understand the requirement of global job interviews, testing and process," Santiago says.

"The spoken English becomes a challenge in terms of conversational fluency, tone and accent," he explains.

Unsustainable

Santiago says that unless the hiring rate in BPO/CC companies improves soon, the Philippines would not sustain the sector's boom and lose its competitiveness as an investment location relative to other Asian countries.

The solution to how to prepare adequately fresh graduates for a job in a BPO firm or call center lay on providing them quality training, which would significantly increase their chances of getting hired, he says.

"The spoken English can be cured over a relatively short period of time," he says. "The workforce needs a bit more seasoning in English but they are trainable and very literate, possess excellent domain knowledge and superior work ethics."

Based on results of training programs that JFKCF itself conducted, training for 80 hours spread over 30 days could increase the number of new hires to BPO/CC firms to as high as 53 percent of fresh graduates.

Santiago says training needs to be focused on preparing applicants in terms of proficiency in the English language, "reducing" one's accent such that it would not be distinct, solving problems, analytical skills, decision-making and execution, and customer satisfaction and experience.

"The foundation seeks to contribute in the effort (to improve the situation) through the development of centers of excellence," he says.

One way that JFKCF does this is by working with universities and colleges to develop their curriculum for a course program of one, two or four years or even MBA programs in BPO/CC entrepreneurship and management.

In fact, the group has already started working with local government institutions, state universities, Catholic universities, Christian universities, other private universities as well as local universities and colleges such as the Quezon City Polytechnic University, System Technology Institute , St. Paul University-Manila and St. Paul University-Tuguegarao.

Santiago says such efforts would benefit the entire country in that the BPO/CC business is no longer restricted to the large metropolitan areas but can be accomplished in the provinces.

Cottage industry

Further, JFKCF has tied up with American solutions provider Five9 to develop "a cottage call center industry" aimed at ensuring the steady growth of the information technology sector in the country.

Five9, an international call center solutions provider, last year set up its Southeast Asian regional headquarters in the Philippines.

The so-called cottage industry program aims at helping to develop between 400 and 500 small- to medium-scale companies in the provinces with the result of creating around 88,000 jobs.

Santiago says that with the advent of new low-cost technology by Five9, it is expected that the 100,000 jobs in the BPO/CC sector would increase by another 90,000 over the next three years, expanding the business by $5 billion.

Industry projections made early last year showed that the sector would grow by between 50 percent and 70 percent in 2005 as demand outstrip available workers, office space and information technology infrastructure.

The range is significantly lower than the average growth rate of 128 percent the industry has achieved over the previous four years.

But Liza Caudal, director for strategic growth programs at PeopleSupport, the sector would continue to enjoy its advantage over other BPO/CC locations like India of cultural affinity with the United States, its competitive telecommunications infrastructure and competitive labor rates.

Challenges

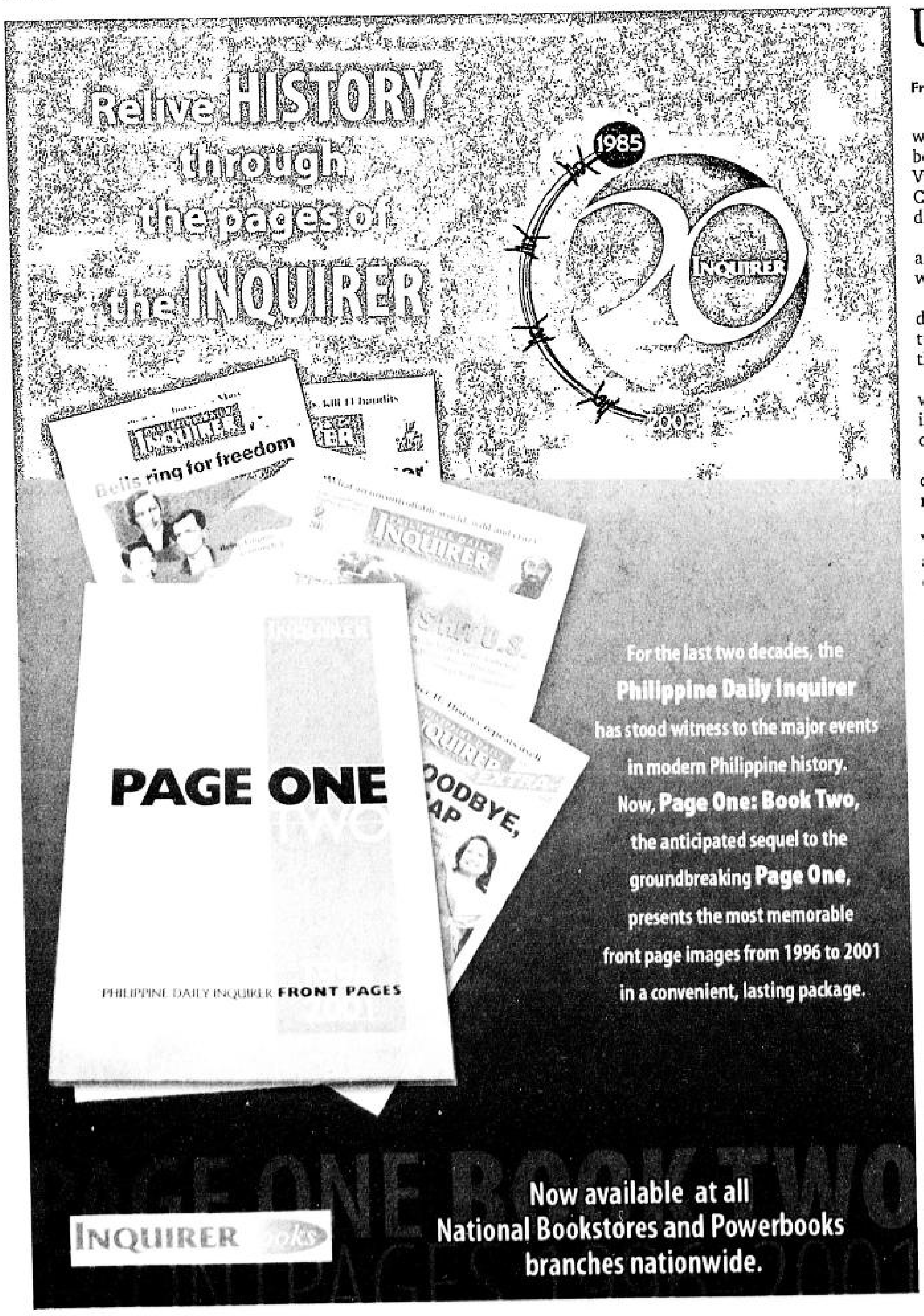
On the other hand, Caudal said the industry was faced with the challenge of sustaining talent pool to support its "phenomenal growth." She said the industry was hiring over a thousand full time employees a week.

"Demand has overtaken the usual sources of supply due to the entry of new players as well as operators of business process outsourced services and shared services," Caudal said.

She says further that the sector's downstream technology partners needed to cope with increased client demands.

Moreover, industry players and new entrants needed to spread out in locations outside Metro Manila where 80 percent of existing operations are based.

Expansion areas identified so far are Cebu City, Clark in Pampanga, Baguio City, Dumaguete City and Davao City.



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UP grad has grand plan ...

From page B1

At first, he was content to just stay on at UP, where he moved up the ranks to eventually become the dean. He replaced Dr. Francisco L. Viray, who was appointed National Power Corp. president and, later, energy secretary during the Ramos administration.

As luck would have it, Vea was appointed administrator of the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System in August 1997.

"I remember that it was raining cats and dogs when I was sworn in," Vea says. "That turned out to be the last significant rainfall of the season. The worst El Niño followed."

Thus, the burden of conserving the meager water resources of Metro Manila, and providing for the irrigation and power requirements of government agencies, fell on his shoulders.

The burden was considerable, but he counts his experience at MWSS as among his most valuable.

"I learned a lot from my stint at MWSS," Vea says. "I learned to work with different agencies and to stand firm on my decisions despite pressures."

Add that experience to the mental discipline honed at UP and he got the preparation he needed to take on the presidency of Mapua.

Vea says it also helped that he used to chair the technical panel for engineering, architecture and maritime education of the Commission on Higher Education.

It was there, he says, where he got exposed to the general state of engineering and architecture education.

He knew then that something needed to be done, and Mapua is an ideal venue to do just that.

Vea is now on his seventh year at the helm of Mapua and he proudly says that he and his deans have taken significant steps toward the goal of preparing Mapua graduates to become engineers and architects of the world, and to extend the school's reach.

Mapua, for instance, has increased its academic offering to include computer science and information management. It also offers environmental engineering with focus on biotechnology.

It also has business administration and nursing, and will soon include human resource management and psychology.

These expansions are part of the Yuchengco group's plan to put up a university with the Mapua Institute of Technology as the flagship college.

"Our approach is for graduates to not just be engineers, but to also be exposed to other disciplines," Vea says.

VEA speaking before a Mapua audience

Mapua will also put up the Malayan High School of Science, a new science high school in Pandacan, Manila.

"It is our way of giving more Filipino families the opportunity to have their children undergo a high school education of international standards, which will hopefully open many doors for them in later years," he says.

Mapua has likewise started offering Master's of Science degrees in all fields of engineering, as well as diploma degrees in different disciplines, including digital arts design.

The 54-year-old Vea approaches his job at Mapua with the same idealism and passion he had as a student and activist.

"Most of us who were active then never lost that desire to help the country in whatever way we can," he says.

Helping the country for him means producing more quality students.

What has changed through the years, he says, is that he is not as impatient as he once was.

He now realizes that there are problems that take time to be solved. But what's important is to finish what one sets out to do, like bringing Mapua to greater heights.

Bankers reach out to street children

CONTRARY TO WHAT MANY say, corporate responsibility fatigue has not set in. At least not for the officers and staff of International Exchange Bank (iBank) who see to it that giving and sharing never go out of style.

iBank's history of helping goes back since its inception. Since 1995, iBank has initiated and participated in several community outreach programs and relief operations to strengthen its practice of corporate social responsibility.

Among its notable projects are its tie-up with Habitat for Humanity, its support of the La Mesa Watershed, and its 'I Win, I Care' promo—wherein a total of P28 million was equally split between winning depositors and pre-screened charitable institutions.

iBank continues that tradition.

Just before Christmas, about 80 iBankers gave up a weekend of respite and trooped to Tuloy sa Don Bosco in Alabang, lugging with them about 95 badminton racquets, shuttlecocks and nets to boost the foundation's sports development program.

For the past several years, Tuloy has been focusing on enhancing its sports programs for its more than 200 wards. Tuloy has been maintaining coaches and trainors specifically to develop the children, ages 9 to 18 years old, in soccer, basketball, volleyball, boxing and soon, touch rugby.

Fr. Antonio 'Molavin, SDB's Tuloy Spiritual and Sports Development Director, can not overemphasize the high premium the Salesian order has put on sports.

"Even before we put up the church and the school, we first build the playground to attract the children. Sports and play are used as an attraction for catechism," Fr. Beng explains. "This is why Salesian priests do not confine themselves to the altars: They play, laugh, win, and lose with the children. You don't just talk to them about God, you have to make God's presence felt among them by playing with them and become one in the playground. It is then easy to convince them to pray with you in the church."

Although Tuloy maintains a school accredited by the Department of Education, they know how equally important sports are to the well-being of the children.

"These kids have been exposed to the streets, malnutrition and abuse. They are physically active but lack intellectual development," relates Fr. Beng. "We believe in character building through sports. The physical development they get from sports instills self-esteem. It is also a physical outlet for all the forms of hurt they have experienced in their life."

It comes as no surprise then for iBank that Tuloy specifically requested for badminton equipment for their Christmas "gift" last year.

Badminton being the "in" sports nowadays, Fr. Beng recognized the need for new badminton materials that could be used by the children, both male and female, who are housed in Tuloy.

St. John Bosco believed in training the spirit by training the body, Fr. Beng explains.

"We use sports to develop not only the physique, but also to instill in them discipline, self confidence, team spirit and hard work as well," he adds.

Thus, aside from the daily sports hour, the kids are exposed to competitions initiated by different sports associations.

With iBank's initiative to help develop Tuloy's badminton program, Fr. Beng predicts more and more Tuloy children will be interested in the sport.

"I can see more kids engaging in this now that we have the equipment," he says, sharing the joy seen in the children's eyes while smashing away at the Tuloy covered courts, competing against the iBankers.

Tuloy sa Don Bosco was started by its executive director Fr. Marciano "Rocky" Evangelista, SDB in 1993 at the Don Bosco Parish in Makati. He envisioned a comprehensive rehabilitation program that would prevent children from returning to the streets and reintegrate them to society as productive individuals.

iBank's relationship with Tuloy is long running.

Five years ago, iBank made Tuloy sa Don Bosco one of its beneficiaries for its 'I Win, I Care' promo, giving the foundation P1.5 million over five years. The money helped Tuloy a lot in covering their expenses for their day to day operations that subsist mainly on the good hearts of corporate donors.

A lot of iBankers also shared a lot of their time, effort and knowledge with the kids of Tuloy sa Don Bosco, serving as volunteers in its tutorial programs.

Hardworking couple...

From page B10

clients, she said.

Social responsibility

But while the focus of the company is in exports, it helps empower Bicol communities by cooperating with nongovernment organizations and the Social Action Center of the Catholic Church.

Shelmed now has 60 full-time employees, 1,200 in-house artisans and a community support base of 2,500 families.

"Social responsibility to the community is the core of our business, according to Med, who is also a Cancer Warrior Foundation trustee.

In consultation with the Department of Labor and Employment, Shelmed instituted the Individual Business Owner (IBO) system where workers work according to their preferred time so they can meet their specific needs.

The system allows the workers to recognize their talents and empowers them as entrepreneurs at the same time.

Shelmed works with the Simon of Cyrene Foundation Inc. by training disabled persons in abaca weaving and braiding and also helps hire students in the Dole's summer job program.

Challenges

Sheldon is the current president of Shelmed while Med is the executive vice president.

Mesh, who is being groomed by her parents to manage the business upon their retirement, cited current technological advances that help bridge travel and communication gaps.

SHELMED was a recipient of the Golden Shell Award in 1983.

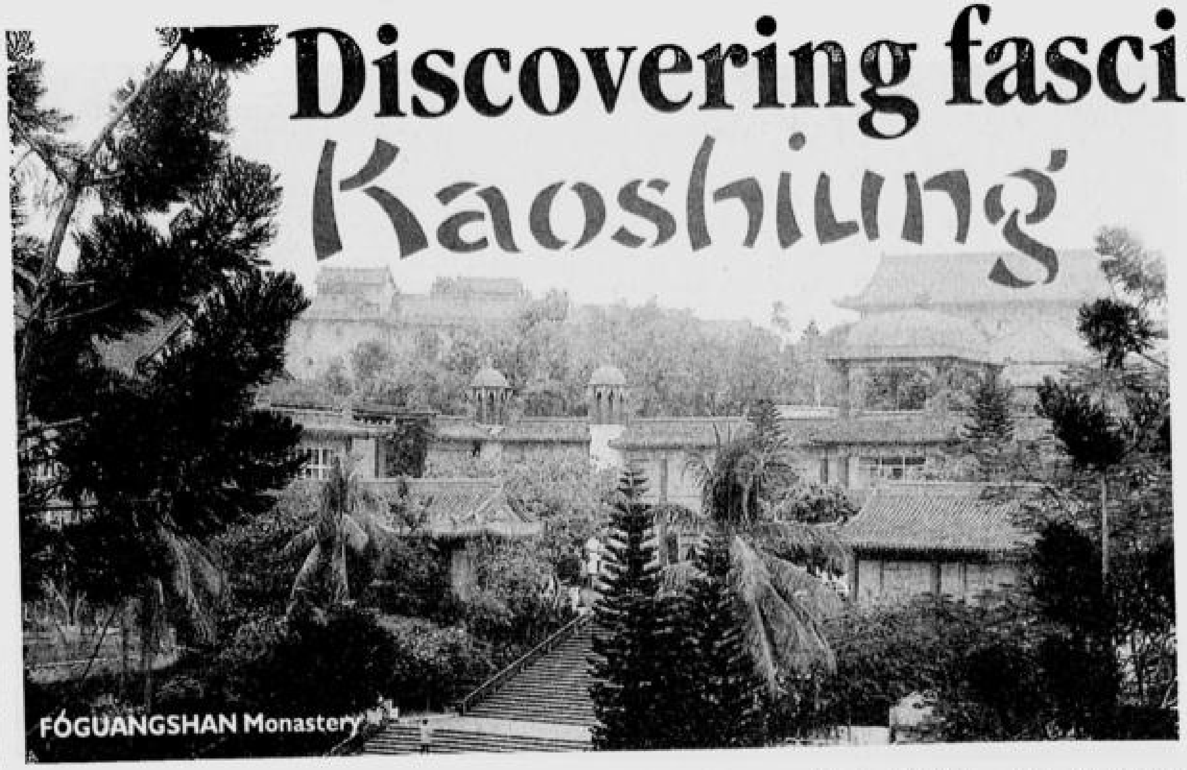
"It's easier to travel now. Before, you have to apply for 10 different visas if you want to travel to Europe but, now you can go around using one visa. Also before, the suppliers had to be visited one by one, now at least the cell phone can be used although sites have to be visited to ascertain reports," Mesh says.

Shelmed plans to forge ahead and prosper based on basic principles it has laid down from the start.

"We have instilled in our children how it is to work with different kinds of people and how to engage in the manufacture of different kinds of commodities. We value loyalty among our employees and will continue sharing with the community the blessings received by the company," says Med.

Shelmed was a recipient of the Golden Shell Award in 1983, a feat among abaca companies and the Gawad Saka as Outstanding High Value Commercial Crops Processor in 2001. *Emir Gamis, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Discovering fascinating Kaoshiung



FÓGUANGSHAN Monastery

FOOD, entertainment and bargains galore at the Lio Ho Night Market

By Sandra Garcia
Contributor

BUSINESS TRAVEL

ON A RECENT TRIP WITH A group of frequent business travelers to Kaoshiung, Taiwan, which we originally thought was just a commercial harbor, we had a generous sampling of its fascinating culture, delicious food and warm and friendly smiles (it's no surprise that Taiwan's China Airlines float was judged the most beautiful entry from outside the Continental United States at the 2006 Rose Parade in Pasadena, California.)

Checking in at the China Airlines check in counter at Naia with the efficient and courteous staff was a breeze. Service in Business Class of our China Airlines Fight CI 632 was superb. The food selection was great. The seats were comfortable with a lot of leg room. We also enjoyed the selection of reading material. (It was the latest issue of Vanity Fair for me).

Our flight arrived on schedule thus giving us time to take a leisurely stroll to the domestic terminal to catch our flight to Kaoshiung. We landed one hour later at the Kaoshiung airport (it puts our Naia to shame) and were promptly met by the smiling Beral Shen, our friendly tour guide.

We drove through downtown Kaoshiung and passed by the popular Juehjiang Shopping Center District. The Love River was a welcome sight as we entered the little road to the driveway of the five-star Ambassador Hotel, our home in Kaoshiung.

The Love River (our view from our posh hotel rooms) is a major city attraction. There are trendy restaurants by its bank and nightly live entertainment. Tourists take the Love River boat trip to enjoy the sights of downtown Kaoshiung and its colorful bridges: Chung Chen, Chixian and Wufu.

We visited the Spring and Autumn Pavilion and the Dragon & Tiger Pagoda, the landmarks around the scenic Chenchin Lake. As we were told, we entered the pagoda for our tour through the dragon's mouth for good luck and exited through the rear of the tiger.

In the evening, it was a sumptuous fresh seafood dinner for us and a wild shopping spree at Lio Ho Night Market. Open daily until 6 a.m. of the following day, It is the most popular night market in the city with 130 stalls featuring a variety of local delicacies, fruits, entertainment and shopping bargains galore.

The next day, we took a two-hour drive to Foguangshan (Mountain of Buddha Light) Monastery. This spectacular sanctuary with a mountain setting has a collection of shrines, universities (with Chinese-Filipinos as part of the student population), serene and fabulously-landscaped gardens, a dining hall for 3,000 people (you won't hear a single sound when they dine), a museum with a tall statue of the Golden Buddha as its centerpiece. One of the nuns, Sister Shi Yi Jih chanted for us and gave a grand tour of the Monastery.

Lay people can participate in Foguangshan's programs, which include chanting and calligraphy retreats. Programs can be tailor-made to the participants needs.

What is now an immense stretch of deep blue-green water was in earlier times a shallow marsh covered with vibrant green water plants. That's the Sun and Moon Lake, a two hour drive from the Foguangshan Monastery. Located in Lalu Island in Yuchi, Nantou, formerly known as the Pearl Island and the late President Chiang Kai Shek's favorite vacation place, the Sun Moon Lake home to the Thao tribe, one of aboriginal tribes in Taiwan.

Although swimming in Sun Moon Lake is not permitted, there is an annual 3-km race called the Swimming Carnival of Sun Moon Lake held around the mid-Autumn festival. Other attractions include a spectacular fireworks display, a laser show and concerts. *(To be continued)*

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2. Condo/Unit 2C Washington Tower Asiaworld, Tambo (w/parking lot)	FA - 339.43	8,484,750
3. Condo/Unit 3B Washington Tower Asiaworld, Tambo (w/ parking lot) Under lease*	FA - 323.69	8,092,250
4. Condo/Unit 9B Washington Tower Asiaworld, Tambo (w/parking lot) Under lease*	FA - 333.2	8,996,400
5. Condo/Unit 9C Washington Tower Asiaworld, Tambo (w/parking lot) Under lease*	FA - 347.67	9,387,000
6. Unit 502 Pacific Coast Plaza Coastal Road (with 1 parking slot)	FA -172.69	2,500,000
7. Unit 503 Pacific Coast Plaza Coastal Road (with 1 parking slot)	FA - 164.62	2,500,000
8. Townhouse/L 1 & 2, B2 Action Lane cor Banner St. cor Stet St., 4th Estate Subd., Brgy San Dionisio Under lease*	LA - 705 FA - 914.62	8,500,000
9. Townhouse/No.25 MJS Ave. & LPL Ave., Levitown Subd., La Huerta	LA - 801 FA - 182.7	6,114,240
MAKATI		
10. Unit 512/Makati Prime Citadel P. Burgos	FA - 43	1,505,000
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11. Lot 8, Block 2, Road Lot 2, Perpetual Subdivision, Bagumbong	LA - 240	312,000
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12. Lot/Pamplona St. Bo. Bucal Lecheria Calamba	LA - 34,750	41,700,000
13. Lot 29-B, Block 4, Road Lot 2 cor Road Lot 4 Monte Cecilia Subd. Bo. Diezmo, Cabuyao	LA - 1,356	2,034,000
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14. Townhouse/L 2, B 7, Richmond Vill. Brgy Bahay Pare, Meycauayan	LA - 252 FA - 283.5	2,500,000
CAVITE		
15. Townhouse/Lot 25, Blk 30 Tangile St. Greenbreeze 1 Subd., Bo. Lancaan Dasmariñas	LA - 514 FA - 297	1,500,000
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20. Lot 3, Block 1, Foliage Hills	LA - 240	840,000
21. Lot 4, Block 1, Foliage Hills	LA - 240	840,000
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24. Condo/Unit 8A ACT Tower, Sen Gil Puyat Ave & H.V. de la Costa St. w/ 2 parking slots	FA - 325.2	10,406,400
25. Condo/Unit 1, 7th Floor, BDO Plaza Paseo de Roxas	FA - 384	13,440,000
26. Condo/Unit 2, 7th Floor, BDO Plaza Paseo de Roxas	FA - 339	11,865,000
27. Condo/Unit 1, 17th Floor, BDO Plaza Paseo de Roxas	FA - 373	13,055,000
28. Condo/Unit 1, 19th Floor, BDO Plaza Paseo de Roxas	FA - 373	13,055,000
29. Condo/Unit 1, 20th Floor, BDO Plaza Paseo de Roxas	FA - 373	13,055,000
30. Condo/Unit 2, 20th Floor, BDO Plaza Paseo de Roxas	FA - 367	12,845,000
31. Condo/Unit 3B ACT Tower, Sen Gil Puyat Ave & H.V. de la Costa St. w/ 2 parking slots. Under lease*	FA - 280.53	8,415,900
CAVITE		
32. Agrifarm/Rwlnd, Bo. Toclong, Kawit *no right of way	LA - 18,457	7,382,800
PASIG		
33. Condo/Unit 1506,15F The Centerpoint Garnet cor J. Vargas Streets Ortigas Center (w/ parking slot) Under lease*	FA - 170	5,740,000
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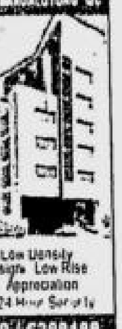

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2sty Thse nr Mindanao Ave & SM City P2.650M / P2.850M In-hse Bank Fincg 426-6965; 425-1508/1509 Ofc hrs only

4br w/ garage nr Ateneo UP Champion Suprmart Sikatuna Vill 9215328 : 09166496838

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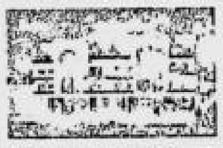
Cubao P1.5M 10%DP 5yrs to Pay "0" Interest 9126976Rose

RUSH Twnhse D. Tuazon Cubao 09173993391

•Teacher Village•
P3.8M
2-CAR GARAGE; 4BR;4T&B W/ MAIDS ROOM & ROOFDECK ALL CONCRETE BANK OR IN-HOUSE FINANCING
939-5325 / 0927-3767064 / 439-1995 / 439-6921



Teachers' Village
2 CAR GARAGE, 4 BR,
4 T&B W/
MAID'S ROOM &
ROOFDECK, ALL
CONCRETE, BANK OR
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Tel: 439-1995; 913-1737
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LOT

QUEZON CITY

300SQM LOT P3.5M PARKWAY VILL ROOSEVELT EDSA Q.C. 7337767/69/73

LA VISTA Mansion type P30M part SWAP of small QC prop+cash Call 426-5650 • 929-1832 • 0919-8212235

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562m² Loc Binangonan Sisna St. • 0917-8986809

3 ADJOINING LOTS
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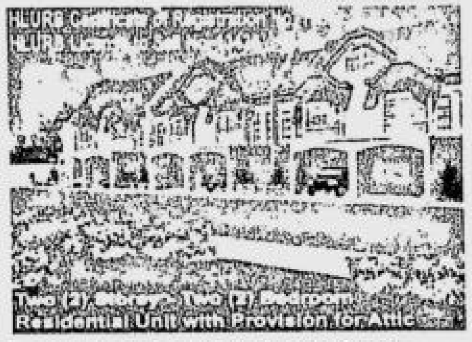
CAVITE

Pallas Athena Imus 150m² 3500/m² 09164691920/8449958 ofc hr - Ann

Ville de la Grotte
MacArthur Highway, Saluysoy, Meycauayan, Bulacan
VERY NEAR SM MARILAO and PROPOSED NORTH RAIL TRANSIT MARILAO STATION


Two (2) Storey, Two (2) Bedroom
Residential Unit with Provision for Attic

Owner: DELAGROTTE HOLDINGS, INC.
2nd Floor SBDB Bldg., MacArthur Highway, Calvario, Meycauayan, Bulacan
Architect: JERRY PALMA IMPOSY, uap
Tel. 02.533.5967 • Mobile: 0922.803.2543
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Balsik Hermosa Bataan 24,312m² 300/m² w/47 Mango Trees & Hse Clean Title Miles 09216722866 09287849699

FARMLAND Fruit trees 3.7ha Call 926-1687 Tanay Rizal

1½HAS Poultry/Hog Farm w/Equipment along Brgy. Rd. Teresa Rizal 533-9225, 532-3291

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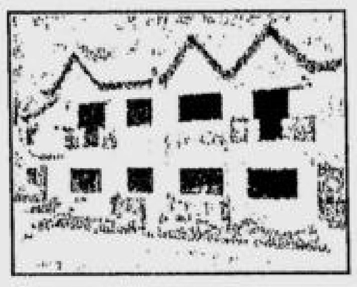
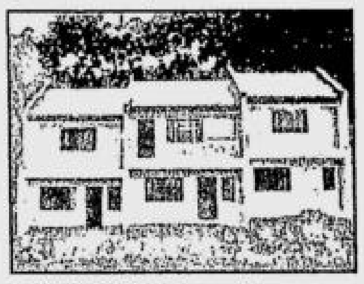


114 sq.m. Floor Area



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MAKATI

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BMW 325 '87 Superkints All Orig A1Cond 310T T:8152568

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1.5% Easy Car Loan 3748765

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Tiendesitas en
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MOLD DESIGN SUPERVISOR

Male/Female 37 and above. A graduate of Mold Designing. Experience in Tool and Die and Technology in any mold manufacturer. Actual experience in EDM repairs technology. Can speak Mandarin, Fokien. Should be fluent in English. Can work in a minimum supervision and willing to work overtime.

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Single, Male/Female, not more than 27 years old. A graduate of Mechanical Engineering or any engineering ocurses. Willing to work and relocate in Subic Bay. Must have license. Can work in a pressure-driven environment. Willing to work long-hours overtime, even Sunday and holiday. Smart, Outspoken, Aggressive and aims high in life.

Call us now at:
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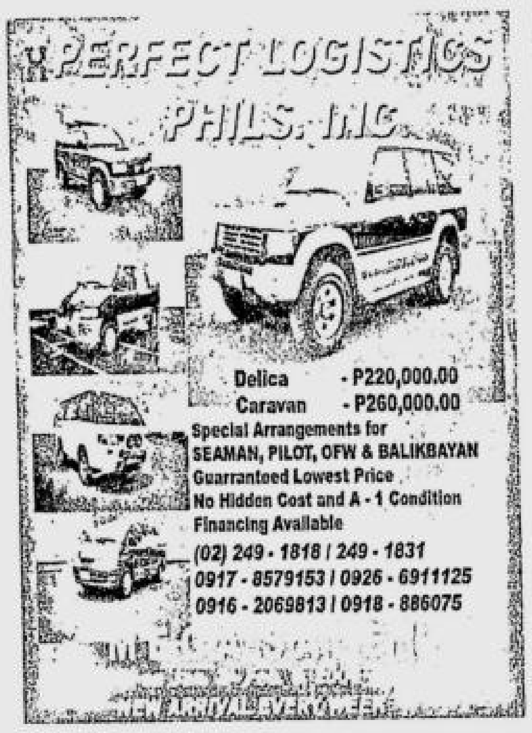

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- Creativity
- Multiple, specialized unique interests
- Curiosity, imagination, and originality in thinking
- Inquisitiveness
- Keen observer
- Sense of self-awareness and sensitivity
- Capacity to achieve at higher than average levels
- Good memory
- Early and extensive language development
- Perseverance
- Preference for older companions/adults
- Ability to work with numbers
- Good at jigsaw puzzles
- Extensive vocabulary
- Advanced reading skills
- Good reasoning ability

your child deserves to be in

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Creative, fun loving and child-oriented.

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QUALIFICATIONS:
- Female
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- For STAFF NURSES - Minimum of 3 years post-registration experience in a 200-bed capacity hospital;

ENROLLED NURSES - Minimum of 1 year experience in a hospital setting with at least 100-bed capacity.

Interview Date: January 24 –25, 2006

Please bring all CREDENTIALS for verification, such as:
a. Resume w/ detailed job description
b. Transcript of Records
c. Passport or NSO authenticated Birth Certificate
d. **Addtl. Docs for RN & EN (RLE, PRC ID, Board Rating, Board Certi.)**
e. 6 pcs colored pictures (must be new passport size w/ white background)
f. Diploma
g. Employment Certification
h. Marriage Contract (if Married)

Interested Applicants may apply at:

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Tel. Nos.: 521-0222/521-6418/521-6209 / E-mail Address: eimsc@tri-isys.com
CEBU Branch Office: Rm. 201, 2nd Flr., Doña Luisa Building, Fuente Osmena, Cebu City
(Near Shakey's Pizza) Tel. Nos.: (032) 255-06-97 or (032) 254-39-81
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10 Accountant (preferably CPA) 10 Document Controller 10 Tower Crane Operator 10 Erector of Tower Crane 10 Logistic + Handling Supervisor 10 Equipment Electrician & Mechanics	10 Electrician 10 Plumber 10 Electrical Foreman 10 Plumbing Foreman 10 HAVC Technician	College Degree/Undergrad. Minimum 5 yrs.experience Preferably with Gulf experience
1 Veterinarian 1 Veterinarian Nurse/ Asst.Vet.Doctor	Doctor/Nurse specialized in Bird (esp. EAGLES&FALCONS), at least with 5 yrs experience preferably in Gulf region	Offer Includes: Accommodation Insurance Transportation
3 Motorcycle Technician/Mechanic/ Electrician	With at least 3 years experience in Diesel and Petrol	To be able to work in Qatar, for 2 yrs.contract

Requirements:
1. Bio-data/Resume (work experience Job Descriptions)
2. Passport
3. 2x2ID Picture
4. Whole Body Picture
5. Employment Certificate
6. Training Certificate
7. TOR/Diploma
8. NBI Clearance
9. Medical Certificate (NGRI Accredited)

***The principal employer will conduct final interview from January 25-31, 2006*
Please send the necessary requirements not later than January 23, 2006

We also need:

100 DOMESTIC HELPERS

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- Lebanon - List Establishment
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POEA –041-LB-120705-UL
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Tel. Nos. 757-1966/832-9961, E-mail Add: nozomi_global@globelines.com
CEBU: 0775 Jasmin cor. Gov. A. Climaco Sts., Capitol Site, Cebu City
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Interviews will be held from 1 to 5 pm Jan. 9, 10 & 11 at Unit 543 Cityland Pasong Tamo Tower 2210 Don Chino Roces Ave., Makati City. 893-6805 Look for Sheryl

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INVITATION TO BID
"AS IS WHERE IS"
DAMAGED MOTOR VEHICLES

2000 ISUZU HI-LANDER WAGON WPT-210
1998 HONDA CRV WAJ-662
1992 ISUZU HIGH SIDE TFF-793
1992 MITS DELICA PASSENGER VAN CTW-587
1995 FUSO CANTER ALUM VAN RCE-537
2002 ISUZU CROSSWIND XUV GRT-467
1997 MITS LANCER GLXI UTB-178
1997 TOYOTA CAMRY LE 2.2 AT USG-941
2000 ISUZU FUEGO 4X2 2.5L GLV-797
1996 HONDA CIVIC 1.6 VTI UKM-415
2001 HONDA CRV WAGON FOS-888
2003 HONDA CIVIC 1.5 LXI XLT-612
2005 TOYOTA VIOS 1.3 XSX-684

For particulars, call 812-4520

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE/FEMALE

ENGLISH TEACHERS
BASIC PAY / TRANSPO ALLOW
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M/F, College Grad. w or w/o Sales Exp. Metro Mla. Area 0915-4489569, 0920-9236753 Dan

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE/FEMALE

Sales Officer
For food industry 24-30yrs old salary with commissions; people - oriented; willing to work night shift; College grad. Please bring resumo and apply in person on Monday Jan. 9 at Emerciana Bldg 161 Kalantiaw corner P. Tuazon Project 4 Quezon City or Call 439-3979

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373-3901 loc. 8302/8303/8220

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MALE/FEMALE

Urgent GRAPHIC ARTIST preferably Fine Arts graduate can operate Roland Machine knowledgeable in Corel / Adobe, Photoshop with in Marikina or nearby area. Send Resume to #52 Milflores St. Twinville Sub. Concepcion Marikina City

MALE/FEMALE

Urgently Needed!!!
• JUNIOR ARCHITECT •
-Min 2yrs in CADD Drafting
•JOB CAPTAIN / PROJ ARCH•
-Min 5yrs exp in planning, design & working drawing detail. BS Architect graduate preferably with License proficient in Auto CADD, 3D, Photoshop not more than 30 years old Call 731-9726 & 27 Look for Ms. Mayette

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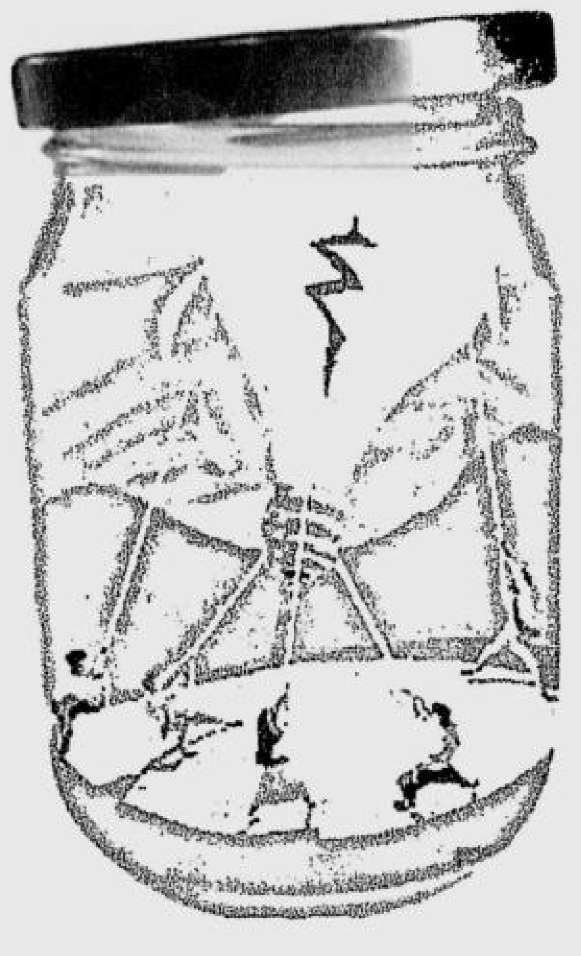

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Philippine Daily Inquirer reported last October 8, 2004 that CEOs say that creativity is now a must to sell... A recent survey of Fortune 500 CEOs asked what they looked for when hiring employees and promoting managers. A whooping 100 percent of the CEOs mentioned creativity as one of the primary characteristics. In fact, almost 60 percent of the CEOs surveyed ranked creativity higher than intelligence.

Program Content: Definition of Creativity and its Link to Innovation and Continuous Improvement (Kaizen); The New Science of Creativity; Myths of Creativity; Mental Locks and Keys to Creativity; Strategies to Enhancing Creativity; Enhancing Team Creativity; Techniques Teams Can Use to Generate Creative Ideas; Keys to Generating Innovative Products, Services and Processes; Plus NEW materials and activities!

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education (DepEd)
SECONDARY EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (SEDIP)
National Project Management Office (NPMO)
5th Floor, Bonifacio Building, DepEd Complex, Meralco Ave., Pasig City
Telephone Nos. 635-98-22; 631-0673; Telefax No. 635-9826

DepED
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

INVITATION TO BID

The Republic of the Philippines through the Department of Education is a recipient of an Official Development Assistance (ODA) loan from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) in the amount of JPY 7.210 million to finance the Secondary Education Development and Improvement Project (SEDIP). It is intended that part of the proceeds of the loan will be utilized for eligible expenditures for the new construction of the different school buildings in the province of Negros Oriental as follows:

Project Description	School	Location
One-Storey Science Laboratory Building One-Storey Home Economics Building One-Storey Industrial Arts Building One-Storey Four Classroom Building with Toilet One-Storey Library Building with Guidance & Faculty Room	Jose P. Caedenas MHS Uptown Annex	Canlaon City
One-Storey Two Classroom Building	Actin NHS	Basay
One-Storey Two Classroom Building	Maglinao NHS	Basay
One-Storey Industrial Arts Building	Maloh PCHS	Siaton
Two-Storey Four classroom Building with science laboratory and Toilet	La Libertad NHS	La Libertad

JBIC requires that bidders and contractors as well as the DepEd, under contracts funded with JBIC ODA loans, observe the highest standard of ethics during the procurement and execution of such contracts. In pursuance of this, JBIC: (i) will reject a proposal for award if it determines that the bidder recommended for award has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent practices in competing for the contract in question; and (ii) will recognize a contractor as ineligible, for a stated period of time, to be awarded a contract funded with JBIC ODA loans if it, at any time, determines that the contractor has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent practices in competing for or in executing another contract financed by JBIC ODA loans or other Japanese ODA.

Bidding is open to all Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) registered contractors or joint venture contractors with valid license, general building in category and eligible to enter into a contract based or award. Schedules of issuance of bidding documents, pre-bid conference and opening of bids are as follows:

Particulars	Canlaon City	Basay	Siaton	La Libertad
Issuance of Bid Documents	Date : Jan. 18, 2006 Place : BAC Office	January 18, 2006 Municipal Hall	January 18, 2006 Municipal Hall	January 18, 2006 Municipal Hall
Pre-bid Conference	Date : Jan. 24, 2006 Place : BAC Office Time : 1:00 PM	January 23, 2006 Municipal Hall 9 AM & 2:00 PM	January 25, 2006 Municipal Hall 2:00 PM	January 26, 2006 Municipal Hall 2:00 PM
Opening of Bids	Date : Jan. 30, 2006 Place : BAC Office Time : 1:00 PM	January 27, 2006 Municipal Hall 10:00 AM & 2:00 PM	January 31, 2006 Municipal Hall 2:00 PM	February 2, 2006 Municipal Hall 2:00 PM

The complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested eligible bidders upon submission of a Letter of Intent to the Office of the BAC Chairman and payment of a non-refundable fee of P2,000.00 to the Cashier's Office.

Submission of Bids together with all the documents required in the bid documents must be delivered to the aforesaid venue and dates. All bids will be opened immediately thereafter in the presence of all bidders or their legally authorized representatives.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. MACUR D. MAROHOMBSAR**
Vice-Chair, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – January 1 & 8, 2006)

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INVITATION TO BID

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) would like to invite suppliers and providers for the following goods:

LCD PROJECTOR 29 UNITS	
Display Technology:	0.55 – inch DDR DLP™ technology from Texas Instruments
Resolution:	Native SVGA (800 x 600) : Max-Resize SXGA+ (1400 x 1050)
Brightness (typical):	2000 lumens
Contrast Ratio (full on/full off):	2000:1 (full on/ full off)
Computer Compatibility:	XGA, SVGA, VGA, VESA, SXGA+Resized PC & Compatibles, Macintosh
Video Compatibility:	NTSC (M, 3.58/4.43 MHz), PAL (B, D, G, H, I, M, N), SECAM (B, D, G, K, K1, L), HDTV (720p 1080i), EDTV (480p), SDTV (480i)
Aspect Ratio:	4:3 native, 16-9 compatible
Displayable Colors:	16.7 million colors
Projection Method:	Front/rear/ceiling-mount/table-top
I/O Connection:	D sub15 x2, VGA for monitor loop through, S-Video composite video Audio minijack, wireless connector
Standard accessories	AC power cord, VGA to VGA, Composite cable, remote control, Battery for remote, Lens cap (hanging), Quick start guide, and Carrying Case

All prices should be free from all duties and taxes and should be valid for the next six (6) months. Interested bidders are required to submit the following documents:

- Company profile
- Registration papers (SEC with Articles of Incorporation, DTI, Mayor's Permit, VAT, etc.)
- List of branches or distribution network or service centers
- Track record in supplying to institutional clients in huge volumes
- Proposed methodology for providing goods specifically indicating procedures, delivery/response time, invoicing, payment requirements, etc.
- Price list of goods

UNFPA does not and cannot guarantee nor commit any volume within the 6-months validity of the price.

Deadline for the submission of bids is on **20 January 2006 at 5:00 p.m.** All bids should be addressed to:

United Nations Population Fund
30th Floor, Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza
6819 Ayala Avenue corner Senator Gil Puyat Avenue,
1226 Makati City
Tel. No. (63-2) 901-0318 Fax No. (63-2) 901-0348

Please look for Ms. Jacquelyn G. Traquiña

UNFPA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect or informality therein, accept the bid and award the contract to the most advantageous offer. UNFPA assumes no obligation or responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expense or loss that may be incurred for the preparation of bids, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made for this Contract.

(Sgd.) **MARIA ROSARIO B. PERALTA**
Administrative Associate, a.i.

(PDI–January 8, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
LIVELIHOOD CORPORATION

INVITATION TO BID

The Livelihood Corporation - KKK Processing Authority is inviting interested parties to join in the public bidding for the sale or lease of the following real estate properties:

PROPERTY/ADDRESS	AREA	DESCRIPTION	FLOOR PRICE
1. **MAKATI PROPERTY** 7th Flr.One Corporate Plaza, 845 Arnaiz Ave., Makati City	987.75 sq.m.	Condominium Units (Whole 7th Floor)	39,510,000.00
2. **LAGUNA PROPERTY** Km. 71, Brgy San Andres, Alaminos, Laguna	17,394 sq.m.	Industrial Land (Former Dairy Project)	7,456,000.00
3. **DAVAO PROPERTY** R. Castillo Street, Brgy Agdao, Davao City	3,695 sq.m.	Light Industrial Land	5,815,000.00
4. **BULACAN PROPERTY** Purok 4, Brgy Santisima Trinidad, Malolos, Bulacan	3,397 sq.m.	Residential Land	4,076,000.00
5. **BOHOL PROPERTY** Brgy Dampas, Tagbilaran City, Bohol	551 sq.m.	Residential Lots (2 Adjoining Lots)	1,488,000.00
6. **CABANATUAN PROPERTY** Brgy Kalikid Sur (Cabu), Cabanatuan City	1,335 sq.m.	Residential Land	401,000.00
7. **BATANGAS PROPERTY** Lot 7 Block 2 Cobella Homes, Danaza, Tanauan, Batangas	137 sq.m.	Residential Lot	343,000.00
8. **BACOLOD PROPERTY** Pag-asa Street Extension, Brgy Tangub, Bacolod City	220 sq.m.	Residential Land	341,000.00
9. **PANGASINAN PROPERTY** Brgy. Buenlag, Binmaley, Pangasinan	1,506 sq.m.	Residential Land	301,000.00

Conditions:

a) Winning bidders shall assume responsibility of paying any and/or all taxes and liens relative to the sale or transfer of the properties.

b) Official Bid forms, documents, Instruction to Bidders and details can be obtained during office hours from the Estate Development and Management Division located at the above-given address after paying to the Cashier a non-refundable amount of Php 500.00 only.

c) All Bids must be submitted to the Office of the Chairman - LIVECOR Bids and Awards Committee attention to the BAC Secretariat not later than 2:00 P.M of February 06, 2006.

d) The Livelihood Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formalities therein and to accept such bid as may be deemed advantageous to the Corporation.

Schedule of Pre-Bidding Conference will be on January 16, 2006, 2:00 P.M. at the Office of the Administrator's Conference Room, LIVECOR, 7/F One Corporate Plaza, 845 A. Arnaiz Ave., Legaspi Vill., Makati City.

For further inquiries, please call Ms. Gigi Buenaventura (Division Chief - Estate Development and Management) at tel. no. 817-0439/cell no.0917-5277897 or Mr. Eduardo Sajonia (BAC Secretariat) at tel. no. 817-0771/ cell no. 0921-2783769.

(Sgd.) **E. ALEXIS G. SEVIDAL**
Chairman, LIVECOR Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–Jan. 8 & 9, 2006)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Leo T. Santos
December 09, 2005

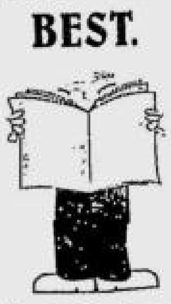
Antonio S. Raymundo
December 08, 2005

The public is hereby notified that the persons, whose pictures appear above, are no longer connected with **Multimedia Telephony, Inc.** (Broadband Philippines) effective on the dates stated below their names. Any transaction entered into by the above individuals for and on behalf of MTI after their separation date, will likewise not be honored.

Multimedia Telephony, Inc. (Broadband Philippines)
106 UMC Bldg., Esteban St., Legaspi Village Makati City
(02) 893-6868

(PDI - Jan. 8, 2006)

WHERE YOU FIND THE BEST.



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KALAW : 528-0213; 527-3342
MEGAMALL : 635-0219; 635-0220

Philippine Amusement & Gaming Corporation

A Global Corporation with a Global Mindset and a Filipino Heart

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
ITB NO.: 12-134-2005

The Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) is inviting all interested bidders in its forthcoming public bidding for the project stated hereunder:

Project : Renewal of Connectivity Project

Approved Budget : Twenty Million Pesos (P 20,000,000.00)

Duration of Contract : Two (2) year contract

Source of Fund : Internally Funded

Only suppliers duly registered with PAGCOR may be allowed to participate in the bidding. Unregistered suppliers must register at the Suppliers Registration & Evaluation Section (SRES), Procurement & Property Department (PPD), 2nd Floor PAGCOR House, 1330 Roxas Blvd., Ermita Manila, Tel. No. 526-0573.

The detailed project particulars and instructions to bidders are discussed in the **Bid Documents** available for issuance **from January 6, 2006 to January 27, 2006** at the BAC Secretariat Unit, PPD-Corporate upon payment of a non-refundable fee of ***Ten Thousand Pesos (Php 10,000.00)***. In order to secure the documents, bidders should present the Official Receipt issued by our Cashier to the BAC Secretary handling the project.

The schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	*Schedule*	
Pre-Bid Conference	January 17, 2006	(2pm)
Submission of Bids	January 30, 2006	(10 am)
Opening of Bids	January 30, 2006	(10 am onwards)

PAGCOR has the right to disqualify any prospective bidder if found that they have submitted falsified documents and/or information, and the right to accept or reject any or all bids, to annul the bidding process, to waive any defects or formalities found therein and to accept such bid or a part thereof as may be deemed most advantageous to PAGCOR, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

PAGCOR reserves the right to reject any and all bids, declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract if there is *prima facie* evidence of collusion between approriate public officers or employees of the agency, or between the BAC and any of the bidders, or if the collusion is between or among the bidders themselves, or between a bidder and a third party, including any act which restricts, suppresses or nullifies or tends to restrict, suppress or nullify competition, or if the BAC is found to have failed to follow the prescribed bidding procedures, or for any justifiable and reasonable ground where the award of the contract will not redound to the benefit of the government *(R.A. 9184, Sec. 41)*.

Please address all communications to the BAC Secretariat Unit, Procurement & Property Department.

(Sgd) **RAFAEL A. FRANCISCO**
Chairperson, BAC 4

(PDI - January 8 & 15, 2006)

CAGELCO II

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The CAGAYAN II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. (CAGELCO II) is inviting all interested bidders to pre-qualify and to bid for the following:

1. **non-performing assets (electrical materials and vehicles) for disposal**
2. **Electrical Materials for Distribution Line Construction**

To be qualified, bidder must have fully complied with the following:

1. Accreditation Requirements (for submission to the Accreditation Committee Chairman, Clarence E. Jacinio)
   - a. Company Profile
   - b. Business Registration
   - c. Business Permit
   - d. BIR/VAT Certificate
   - e. Latest Income Tax Return (ITR)
   - f. List of Clients for a period of three (3) years if applicable
2. Must be able to pay P2,000.00 (for this particular bidding only and not refundable) for bid documents during the pre-bid conference.

CAGELCO II reserves the right to reject any/or all bid without any reason, waive any formality therein, accepts proposal most advantageous to the cooperative and assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify any bidder for expenses or losses that may be incurred in the preparation of bid nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

Pre-bid conference and bidding schedules shall be informed to all qualified bidders through fax and mails.

Deadline for submission of requirements - January 23, 2006.

CAGAYAN II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
Macanaya District, Aparri, Cagayan
Tel. No. (078) 888-2173 • Telefax No. (078) 888-2940
E-mail cagelco2main@digitelone.com

(Sgd) GABRIEL A. TORDESILLAS
General Manager

(PDI-January 8 and 15, 2006)

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

Re-invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Construction Management (CM) Consultancy Services for the BSP Branch Building in Butuan

The Scope of Construction Management Work includes among others quantity surveying services, preparation of detailed estimates, value engineering, full construction management and supervision for the proposed BSP Branch Building in Butuan.

1. The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, through the BSP 2005 Building Construction Account intends to apply the sum of three million one hundred seventy thousand pesos (P3,170,000.00) being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for INFRA-2005-02. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at the opening of the financial proposals.
2. The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas now calls for the submission of Letters of Intent (LOIs) from potential bidders to apply for eligibility and short listing for the construction management consultancy services. Interested consultants must submit their LOIs and accomplished Eligibility Documents on or before 30 January 2006 / 1:30 PM at the BAC Secretariat, Room 204, 2nd Floor, Five Storey Building, BSP Main Complex, A. Mabini cor. P. Ocampo Sts. Manila. Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis. Eligibility documents may be obtained from the BAC Secretariat on January 09 to 24 2006 for a non-refundable fee of P500.00, Room 204, 2nd Floor, Five Storey Building at the BSP Main Complex, A. Mabini cor. P. Ocampo Streets, Manila. Only those that are short listed will be entitled to submit bids.
3. The BAC shall draw up the short list of consultants from those who have submitted Letter of Intents and have been determined as eligible both in accordance with the provisions of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184) and its implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A). The short list of prospective bidders shall consist of five (5) consultants.

   The firm's applicable experience (completed comparable and related consultancy services and know cases of prior performance) shall be used as criteria for short listing.
4. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the IRR-A of R.A. 9184, and is restricted, unless otherwise stated, to Filipino citizens or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest belonging to citizens of the Philippines. In accordance with IRR-A of R.A. 9184, only bids from short listed consultants will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in the Eligibility Documents. In accordance with the IRR-A of R.A. 9184 the contract will only be awarded to the Highest Rated and Responsive Bidder who was determined as such during post-qualification.

   The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas shall evaluate bids using the **Quality-Cost Based Evaluation** procedure. The criteria and rating system for the evaluation of bids shall be provided in the Instructions to Bidders.
5. The minimum eligibility requirements are as follows:
   - 5.1 The consultant must have been in operation for the last fifteen (15) years (reckoned from the date of the first advertisement/posting of this Invitation) engaging in the lawful practice of the type of consulting services called for in this Invitation.
   - 5.2 The consultant must have rendered within the last ten (10) years (reckoned from the date of the first advertisement/posting of this Invitation) Construction Management consultancy services for at least five (5) completed new construction projects of similar nature/magnitude/complexity as the proposed BSP projects and must be able to submit a certification of satisfactory performance for the client for at least three (3) of the required five (5) projects.
   - 5.3 The principal or Managing Officer must be a Registered Architect or Engineer with at least fifteen (15) years experience in actual construction work and construction management.
   - 5.4 The Project Manager for the projects must be a registered Architect or Civil Engineer with minimum fifteen (15) years experience in actual construction work five (5) years of which experience in construction management.
   - 5.5 The Resident Construction Management Team should at least be Registered Architects/Engineers each with a minimum ten (10) years combined design/construction management and construction experience where the Construction Management experience should at least be five (5) years. The minimum number required for the team should at least be three excluding the principal and project manager.
   - 5.6 In case of a joint venture, a valid joint venture agreement shall be required. The joint venture must have rendered construction management consultancy services for at least two (2) completed projects of similar magnitude as the proposed BSP project.
   - 5.7 A consultant with at least two (2) on-going and/or awarded BSP consultancy projects at the time of this invitation will not be allowed to participate in this consultancy service requirement.
   - 5.8 For those firms with previous or current Design Consultancy Services with the BSP, a certificate of satisfactory performance issued by the Bank must be submitted.
6. For inquiries, please call BAC Secretariat - telephone no. 524-7011 local 3143.
7. The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reserves the right to reject any and all bids, annul the bidding process, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

(Sgd.) JUAN DE ZUÑIGA, JR.
Chairman

(PDI - Jan. 8 & 23, 2006)

POEA
24-HR HOTLINES
722-1144 • 722-1155

National Power Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
NPC-WITADD-2006-001 (RE-BID)

The Bids and Awards Committee (BAC)-PSD of NPC invites interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for **LONG-TERM BROKERAGE SERVICES** for NPC importations arriving from March 1, 2006 to February 28, 2007 for Air and Ocean carriers.

The service require clearance of cargo from Customs custody and delivery to various NPC destinations within Metro Manila and other designated delivery points in Luzon.

The schedule of activities in connection with the public bidding is as follows:

Issuance of Bid Documents	-	**January 9, 2006 - February 3, 2006**
Pre-Bid Conference	-	**January 23, 2006 at 2:00 PM** **Pahiyas Room, Solarium Hall,** NPC-HO Bldg. 1, Diliman, Quezon City
Bidding Date & Time	-	**February 7, 2006 at 2:00 PM** **Kañao Room, Solarium Hall,** NPC-HO, Bldg. 1, Diliman, Quezon City

Complete sets of Application form for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be obtained from the Warehousing/Inventory, Traffic & Asset Disposal Division, Materials Management Dept. of NPC, Diliman, Quezon City upon payment of non-refundable fee of PHP 500.00 per schedule. **Issuance of eligibility and bid documents mornings only, 8:30 to 11:30 AM up to the specified time as stated in the bid schedules above.**

Bids will be received at the assigned Bidding Room, PSD, MMD, NPC, Diliman, Quezon City on the date and time specified above after which Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals will be opened in the presence of attending bidders. Prospective Bidders shall signify conformance to bidding terms and conditions as required and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution in accordance with the IRR of "Republic Act 9184".

The Bidder shall furnish as part of his/her bid, a bid security in the amount equivalent to PhP 50,000.00 per bid form in the form of Cash, Manager's/Cashier's check or Surety Bond, penal and callable on demand with 120 days validity period from the date of opening of bids issued by a Surety or Insurance Company accredited by the Office of the Insurance Commission.

NPC serves the right to reject any or all bids at any time prior to award of contract, waive any defects therein, and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation, without thereby incuring any of the following: a) liability whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bids and b) obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the grounds for the basis of the BAC's action.

CHAIRMAN
Bids and Awards Committee
PSD-NPC

(PDI-January 8, 2006)

GROWTH WITH EQUITY IN MINDANAO (GEM) PROGRAM

A Project of the United States Agency for International Development
The General Contractor is THE LOUIS BERGER GROUP, INC.
Tel: (6382) 225-1569 • Fax: (6382) 225-1479
USAID Contract No: 492-C-00-02-00018-00

URGENT REQUIREMENT

INVITATION FOR SUBMISSION OF EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST/STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATION FOR DETAILED ENGINEERING AND COST ANALYSIS SERVICES

The Louis Berger Group, Inc. (LBGI) a U.S. firm contracted by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to implement the Growth with Equity in Mindanao (GEM) Program, is inviting interested and qualified local engineering consulting firms to submit their expressions of interest and qualification statement for participation in the detailed engineering and cost analysis for the construction of various small-scale Community Infrastructure Projects (CIP) throughout the conflict-affected areas of Mindanao. The projects, which cost anywhere between PhP500,000 to PhP2,500,000, may include, but be not limited to warehouse/solar dryer packages, box culverts/overflow structures, boat landings/piers, trading centers, waiting sheds, road improvements, irrigation and water supply systems and other similar structures which will comprise the menu of the program. Detailed engineering and cost analysis contracts are expected to be awarded towards the 2nd week of February 2006.

The work to be contracted may include among others: localized detailed engineering design and cost analyses (using commercial CADD and other MS software) based on new and/or existing standard designs developed for the 250 CIP projects already completed, preparation of PERT/CPM schedule, bar chart / construction schedule with S-Curve, bill of quantities, technical specifications, and other related documents necessary for preparing contract packages using competitive bidding procedures.

Interested firms may send their responses to the following address: The Deputy Program Manager for Contracts, GEM Program, 1st Floor, 1 Ladislawa Bldg., Ladislawa Ave., Buhangin, Davao City 8000, Philippines. While no closing date has been set, it is assumed that the GEM Program will evaluate submissions upon receipt and only consider these for possible contract award for the initial set of projects to be designed, gradually expanding consulting firm selection based on the responses received at a later date.

Responding firms should include together with their expression of interest their company profile indicating the full name, addresses, and contact numbers of the principal personnel, certified copies of the firm's: (i) SEC registration for corporations or partnerships and DTI registration, (ii) PRC licenses (for the current year) of the listed project engineers, (iii) the firm's VAT registration certificate, (iv) registration of business name, (v) current business permit, (vi) audited financial statement for the past two years, (vii) list of completed detailed engineering projects showing amount of contract and client-supported by certificates of completion; as well as a list of on-going projects, and key personnel's curriculum vitae.

(PDI-January 8, 2006)

Northern Samar Electric Cooperative, Inc.

NORSAMELCO

Brgy. Magsaysay, Bobon, Northern Samar
MOBILE (0917)3619744 • E-mail Norsamelco@Yahoo.com • Fax: (055)251-8163

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The Northern Samar Electric Cooperative Incorporation (NORSAMELCO) invites interested suppliers to participate in Public Bidding for the supply, delivery, installation and commissioning of one (1) unit Brand New 10 MVA Sub-station to be constructed at Catarman N. Samar.

Prospective bidders has the financial, technical, production and after sales service capability necessary to perform the contract. And have completed the similar project.

Interested bidders must submit their pre-qualification document as follows:

- Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws
- SEC or DTI Registration as appropriate
- BIR or VAT Certificate
- Audited Financial Statement for the current year duly received by BIR
- Business Permit for the current year
- List of similar project or contract (i.e. name, address, tel. no, amount, date and year completed)

After submission of the above requirement, Bid Documents may be obtained at the PBAC Secretary during office hour starting Jan. 3, 2006 to Jan. 14, 2006 and upon payment of non-refundable fee amounting to P5,500.00.

A pre-bid conference will be held on January 24, 2006 at 10am and submission of a sealed bid is on February 21, 2006. Opening of bids will be held on February 22, 2006 at 10am NORSAMELCO main office.

All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in the form of Cash, Manager's Check in the amount equivalent to one percent (1%) or Bidder's Bond in the amount equivalent to Two and Half percent (2.5%) of the total bid price.

NORSAMELCO reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any minor defect therein and accept the bids considered most advantageous and responsive to coop.

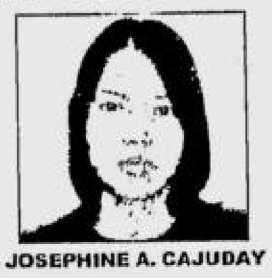
(Sgd.) HENRY C. BANJAWAN
PBAC Chairman

Noted by:

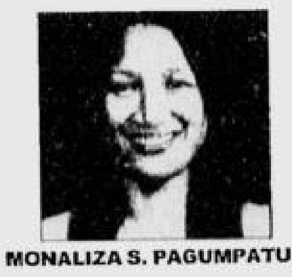
(Sgd.) SALVADOR G. HERNANDEZ
General Manager

(PDI – Jan. 2 & 8, 2006)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC



JOSEPHINE A. CAJUDAY



MONALIZA S. PAGUMPATUN

This is to notify the public that as of January 4, 2006, **Josephine A. Cajuday** and **Monaliza S. Pagumpatun** whose pictures appear above are no longer connected with **MA-AY Enterprises** or **ALS Group of Companies**. Any transaction entered into by the above-mentioned persons on or after said date for and on behalf of **MA-AY Enterprises** and **ALS Group of Companies** including its officers, directors and employees will no longer be honored and recognized.

(PDI–January 8, 2006)

January 6, 2006

TO ALL STOCKHOLDERS OF SALCON POWER CORPORATION:

Please be advised that KEPCO Philippines Corporation ("*Kephilco*"), KEPCO Philippines Holdings, Inc. ("*Kepco Holdings*"), Intrepid Holdings, Inc. ("*Intrepid*") and JAD Holdings, Inc. ("*Jad*") have filed a Tender Offer Report (SEC Form 19-1) with the Securities and Exchange Commission (The "*SEC*") and the Philippine Stock Exchange ("*PSE*") pursuant to Section 19 of the Securities Regulation Code in connection with the Buyers' intention to acquire common shares representing at least 43.81% but no more than 60% of the outstanding capital stock of Salcon Power Corporation (the "*Company*") (such intention to acquire the Shares, the "*Tender Offer*").

Kephilco, Kepco Holdings, Intrepid and Jad have obtained commitments from Salcon Holdings Philippines, Inc. ("*SHPI*") and ATC Engineering Sdn Bhd ("*ATC*") for the purchase by Kepco Holdings, Intrepid and Jad (collectively the "*Buyers*") of an aggregate of 654,995,108 common shares (approximately 73.02% of the Shares subject of the Tender Offer) from SHPI and ATC. The Buyers intend that the Intrepid and Jad (collectively, the "*IJ Group*") shall acquire any Shares that may be tendered by any stockholders other than SHPI and ATC in response to the Tender Offer.

The Tender Offer shall commence at 9:30 a.m. on January 6, 2006, and end at 3:00 p.m. on February 2, 2006 (the "*Tender Offer Period*"). The Shares to be tendered are intended to be crossed on the PSE on February 15, 2006 (the "*Cross Date*"). Should any of the business days during the period from January 6, 2006, the commencement of the Tender Offer Period, until February 15, 2006, the Cross Date, be declared a non-working holiday after the date hereof, the Tender Offer Period shall be extended and the Cross Date postponed, by such number of business days as is equivalent to the number of business days declared non-working holidays after the date hereof.

The purchase price for the acquisition of the Shares is P 1,614,596,656.00, or P1.80 per share, and will be payable in Philippine Pesos. Subject to the Terms of the Tender Offer attached as **Annex A** to the letter dated January 6, 2006 (the "*Offer Letter*") sent by the Buyers and Kephilco to the Company's stockholders of record as of December 23, 2005 (the date of the most recent list of stockholders available from the Stock Transfer Agent), all stockholders of the Company may tender all or a portion of their shares for acceptance and purchase by the Buyers within the Tender Offer Period.

The Buyers intend to pay for the tendered and accepted Shares on the Cross Date. Payments for the tendered and accepted Shares shall be made available by ATR-Kim Eng Securities, Inc. (the "*Paying Agent*") in the form of checks made payable to the tendering Stockholder for pick-up by the tendering Stockholders after 3:00 p.m. on the date falling three (3) business days after the Cross Date at the following address: 17th Floor, Tower One & Exchange Plaza, Ayala Triangle, Ayala Avenue, Makati City. Any payment not collected from the Paying Agent within thirty (30) calendar days from the payment date referred to above shall be dispatched, via registered mail, to the last recorded address of the tendering Stockholder at that Stockholder's risk.

Tendering Stockholders who hold stock certificates ("*Scrip Stockholders*") should submit, within the Tender Offer Period, their duly endorsed stock certificates and the duly accomplished Application to Tender Shares (the "*Application*") in the form attached as **Annex B** to the Offer Letter to ATR-Kim Eng Securities, Inc. (the "*Depository*") at 17th Floor, Tower One & Exhcnage Plaza, Ayala Triangle, Ayala Avenue, Makati City, together with the other documentary requirements specified in the Offer Letter.

For the convenience of Scrip Stockholders who are based in Cebu and Davao or elsewhere outside Luzon, shares of common stock in the Company may be tendered by submitting the requirements specified in the Offer Letter to the Cebu and Davao branches of the Depository no later than 3:00 p.m. on January 30, 2006:

Cebu Office:
ATR-Kim Eng Securities, Inc.
Room 206
Cebu Holdings Center, Cebu Business Park
Cebu City
Telephone No.: (032) 231 1324
Attention: Ms. Cheryl L. Go

Davao Office:
ATR-Kim Eng Securities, Inc.
No. 7 MT Aquino Building
J.P. Cabaguio Avenue
Davao City
Telephone No. (082) 224 2860
Attention: Mr. Miguel Luis R. Aquino

After 3:00 p.m. on January 30, 2006, Scrip Stockholders who are based outside Luzon may tender their shares of common stock in the Company only by submitting the foregoing requirements to the Depository's offices in Makati City.

The Depository reserves the right to require tendering Stockholders to present additional documents for purposes of determining the validity, eligibility and acceptability of the shares of common stock being tendered by those Stockholders.

The Depository will submit the share certificates for validation to Metrobank Trust Banking, the Company's stock transfer agent (the "*Stock Transfer Agent*") at 17th Flr., GT Tower International 6813 Ayala Ave., corner H.V. dela Costa St., Makati City. Defective Applications (*e.g.*, any Application with a discrepancy between the specimen signatures on file and the endorsement on the stock certificates) must be corrected within the Tender Offer Period to avoid being rejected by the Buyers. Consequently, Stockholders are strongly urged against tendering their shares at the last minute to allow all parties sufficient time within which to correct any deficiencies in the Application.

Stockholders are also urged to indicate their telephone numbers in their respective Applications to allow the Depository to inform them immediately of any deficiencies in their Applications.

Tendering Stockholders whose shares are lodged with the Philippine Central Depository Nominee Corporation (such Stockholders, "*Scripless Stockholders*") should instruct their brokers to electronically transfer their shares of common stock in the Company to ATR-Kim Eng Securities, Inc. (the "*Broker*") in accordance with the guidelines attached as Annex F to the Offer Letter for receipt by the Broker prior to 3:00 p.m. of February 2, 2006. The Broker shall thereafter act as custodian of the Shares until such time that sale and transfer of the Shares to the Buyers is completed or the tendered Shares are withdrawn in accordance with the Terms of the Tender Offer attached as Annex A to the Offer Letter.

Tendering Stockholders may withdraw any Shares tendered any time before the end of the Tender Offer Period. For a withdrawal to be effective, written notice of withdrawal must be received by the Depository (for Scrip Stockholders) or by the Broker (for Scripless Stockholders) no later than 3:00 p.m. of February 2, 2006. Withdrawn Shares shall be returned in the same form they were received to the withdrawing Stockholder's broker (for scripless Shares) or to the withdrawing Stockholder (for certificated Shares) within three (3) trading days from the end of the Tender Offer Period. Any and all costs and expenses incurred in connection with the return of the withdrawn Shares shall be borne by the Stockholder making the withdrawal.

Copies of the SEC Form 19-1 filed with the SEC and the tender offer application kit may be obtained by Stockholders from the Company and the Broker at their addresses indicated above, and from the Public Information and Assistance Center of the Philippine Stock Exchange at G/F, PSE Center, Exchange Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Copies of this letter, along with the Application and the attachments will be sent to the Company's stockholders of record as of December 23, 2005 (the date of the most recent available list from the Stock Transfer Agent) by registered mail.

Thank you and best regards.

KEPCO Philippines Corporation
KEPCO Philippines Holdings, Inc.

By:

Name: Lee, Gil-Gu

Intrepid Holdings, Inc.
JAD Holdings, Inc.

By:

Name: Dennis T. Villareal

(PDI--Jan. 6, 7 & 8, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Aklan
Bids and Awards Committee

Invitation for Bids (IFB)

Supply, Delivery, Placing, and Installation of Hospital Goods for the Expansion, Rehabilitation and Upgrading of the Dr. Rafael S. Tumbokon Memorial Hospital to a Second Level Referral (Tertiary Non-Teaching) Hospital

Loan No. 4446 PH

1. The Government of the Philippines has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development in various currencies towards the cost of the **Local Government Finance and Development Project**. It is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contract for Supply, Delivery, Placing, and Installation of Hospital Goods for the Expansion, Rehabilitation and Upgrading of the Dr. Rafael S. Tumbokon Memorial Hospital to a Second Level Referral (Tertiary Non-Teaching) Hospital.
2. The Province of Aklan invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the supply, delivery, placing and installation of the following hospital goods for the Expansion, Rehabilitation and Upgrading of the Dr. Rafael S. Tumbokon Memorial Hospital to a Second Level Referral (Tertiary Non-Teaching) Hospital:

   SP-060-EQ-04
   1 unit of X-Ray system including
   - a. R/F tilting table typed and equipped with a remote control panel and 3 supply magazine (3 size);
   - b. 500 mA X-ray generator
   - c. Image Intensifier
   - d. X-ray tube
   - e. TV System with accessories and safety devices

   SP-060-EQ-05
   103 units of Hospital Beds and E-carts of various types

   SP-060-EQ-06
   86 units of Bedside Cabinets

   SP-060-EQ-07
   36 units of Tables and Cabinets

   SP-060-EQ-08
   251 units of Sofa, Chairs and Benches

   SP-060-EQ-09
   13 units of Movable Wooden Partition

   SP-060-EQ-10
   413 lineal meters of Curtain & Linen Partitions

   SP-060-EQ-11
   106 units of Vertical Blinds

   SP-060-EQ-12
   691 units of various Signages
3. Bidding will be conducted through the national competitive bidding procedures specified in the World Bank's Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits.
4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from and inspect the bidding documents at Sub-Project Management Office, DRSTMH Project Site, Mabini St., Kalibo, Aklan.
5. A complete set of bidding documents in English may be purchased by interested bidders upon submission of a written application to the address below and upon payment to the Provincial Treasurer's Office of a non-refundable fee of Three Thousand Pesos (P3,000.00). The method of payment will be in the form of cash or cashier's cheque. The documents will be sent by courier service.

   Sub-Project Management Office (SPMO)
   Engr. Victory M. Fernandez
   Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee (BAC)
   DRSTMH Job Site, Mabini St.
   Kalibo, Aklan
   Tel. No. 036-268-9781
   Telefax. 036-268-4452
6. Bids must be delivered to the Conference Room, Provincial Governor's Office, Gov. Roberto Q. Garcia, Sr. Building (former Provincial Guesthouse), Capitol Site, Kalibo, Aklan on or before 9:00 A.M., 22 February 2006. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of five (5) percent of the total bid price in a form of cash, certified check, bank guarantee, letter of credit or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late bids will be rejected. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the Conference Room, Provincial Governor's Office, Gov. Roberto Q. Garcia, Sr. Building (former Provincial Guesthouse), Capitol Site, Kalibo, Aklan at 9:00 A.M., 22 February 2006.
7. A pre-bid conference will be held at the Conference Room, Gov. Roberto Q. Garcia, Sr. Building (former Provincial Guesthouse), Capitol Site, Kalibo, Aklan at 9:00 A.M., 07 February 2006.

(Sgd.) ENGR. VICTORY M. FERNANDEZ
Provincial Engineer
Chairman

(PDI - Jan. 8, 2006)

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SY GUIOK (LUIS)

Peacefully joined his Creator on January 5, 2006 at the age of 78.

Founder and Chairman LJS Group of Companies
METRO KITCHENWARE, INC.
GOODY PRODUCTS PHIL., INC.
CANNON BABY SAFE PRODUCTS, PHIL., INC.
LJS LENDING CORP.
GRAND CHEER INVESTMENTS LTD.

His loving wife **LYDIA TAN SY**; children **JEANETTE** and **JACINTO KEH**, **JUDY** and **EPISON TAN**, **JOSEPHINE** and **JEFFREY ONG**, **ROBERT** and **RUMIKO SY**, **JOANAHAN SY**, **JAMES** and **SALLY SY**; grandchildren **JOHN JACQUESON**, **JACQUELINE JANELLE**, **EDGAR**, **JENNY**, **JONI ANDREA**, **JAMIE ABIGAIL**, **JOYCE ANN**, **JEFFERSON**, **YUKI**, **AMI**, **JENNA**, **JELVIN**, **JERYL** other relatives and friends request the readers to pray for his eternal happiness in heaven.

His remains lie in state at the NACIONAL MEMORIAL HOMES, G. ARANETA AVE., QUEZON CITY

Interment will be on January 13, Friday at Heritage Park ,Taguig at 9:00 a.m.

I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.
John 14:6

The Board of Directors, Officers and Staff of
THE plaza
Condole with the family of

Imelda Albano Reyes

Executive Vice President

who passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on January 5, 2006.

Her remains lie in state at the
Santuario de San Antonio Parish,
Capilla dela Virgen.

There will be a funeral Mass
on Tuesday, January 10, 2006, 9:00 a.m.
at Santuario de San Antonio Parish,
Capilla dela Virgen.

We extend our condolences to her family
and love ones and join the pious readers
in praying for the eternal repose of her soul.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life." John 3:16

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

George Angelo G. Padolina

who joined our Creator
on 01 January 2006 at the age of 52

wish to convey our sincerest and heartfelt gratitude
to all those who expressed sympathy, extended support,
visited and kept vigil, offered prayers and bouquets,
attended the services and funeral rites, and those who
in countless ways, condoled, helped and comforted us
in this time of our deepest sorrow.

God bless you all.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring... **INQUIRER OBITUARIES**

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate;
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT • MESSAGE OF THANKS •
DEATH ANNIVERSARY • REQUIEMS •
FREE OBIT DESIGN

LUIS "AWIE" P. LOGARTA, II

Peacefully passed away on January 4, 2006
at the Makati Medical Center at the age of 39.

He is survived by his loving wife **Ma. Melanie Edano Logarta**. His children **Ma. Louielane, Luis III, Paolo** and **Gabriele**.

His parents **Alicia P. Logarta** and **Ernesto B. Logarta, Sr.** (†), brothers former Manila Councilor **Jon-jon** and wife **Marilou, Antonio** and **Allen**. His nephews **Bogart, Joem, Jojo** and **TJ**.

His remains lie in state at St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Chapel, Magallanes Village, Makati City. His remains will be transferred to Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish in Rosario Complex, Barangay San Vicente, San Pedro, Laguna on January 09, 2006 after the 9 a.m. Mass.

Interment will be held on Tuesday, January 10, 2006 at Manila Memorial Park in Dasmariñas, Cavite, after the necrological services and concelebrated mass to be officiated by Most Rev. Francisco C. San Diego, DD., Bishop of Pasig and clergies of the Diocese of San Pablo at 9:00 a.m.

The Board of Directors, Officers and Staff of

CARMONA PROPERTIES, INC.
CARMONA REALTY AND DEVELOPMENT CORP.
LA MIRADA DEV. AND MARKETING CORP.
LA MIRADA CONSTRUCTION CO., INC.
LA MIRADA MINING CORP.
XANDER CABLE, INC.
A.P. LOGARTA REALTY AND DEV. CORP.

announces with deep sorrow the demise of

LUIS "AWIE" P. LOGARTA, II

last January 04, 2006 at the Makati Medical Center

His remains lie in state at the St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Chapel, Magallanes Village, Makati City and will be transferred on January 09, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. to the Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Parish Church, Rosario Complex, San Pedro, Laguna.

Interment will be held on January 10, 2006, at the Manila Memorial Park, Dasmariñas, Cavite after the 9:00 o'clock Mass.

Our Dearly Beloved

CLODUALDO "DONDING" QUEIPO BERMEJO

Peacefully joined his Creator on December 27, 2005
at the age of 57.

His wife **Lyn**, loving children **Gerald** and **Ian**, grandson **Weiland**, brothers and sisters **Marilou, Mario, Inday, Nona, Fe, Amy, Emma, Susan** and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Chapel Q, Loyola Memorial Chapels Guadalupe, Makati City.

Interment will be at The Heritage Memorial Park, Taguig after the 8:00 a.m. Mass on January 10, 2006.

MARCIANA CAPALAD PARULAN VDA. DE JESUS

(Inang Anang)

Peacefully called to God's home on January 7, 2006 at the age of 90.

Her most loving children **Atty. Abel and Cely, Yoly and Albert Sena, Dra. Carol and Dr. Dan Mariano, Oscar and Dory, Omie and Des, Boy and Marlene, Baby and Willy Gatmaitan**, her grandchildren and great grandchildren request their relatives, friends and the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Wake	:	January 7-8, 2006 Dulce Funeral Homes, J. Abad Santos Avenue cor. Dinalupihan St., Tondo, Manila;
		January 9-11, 2006 Family residence at Brgy. Siling Bata, Pandi, Bulacan
Interment	:	January 11, 2006 at the Immaculate Concepcion Memorial Park, Pandi, Bulacan.

HONESTO "MANONG" VILLAROSA, SR.

of Magsingal, Ilocos Sur and Lapaz, Abra

Former President,
Ilaw at Buklod ng Manggagawa (IBM Labor Union)

Peacefully joined his Creator
on January 3, 2006 at the age of 78.

His bereaved children **Engr. Benedict, Claro, Dionisio, Honesto, Jr., Dr. Ronaldo** and **Niño**, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the Malate Church, Malate, Manila.

Interment to be announced later.

> **"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."**
>
> — John 3:16

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CLASSIFIEDS

TRANSCO'S O&M UNITS ISO-CERTIFED

of ISO 9001:2000 Certificat
200

The National Transmission Corporation (TransCo) has completed the ISO certifications for all its operation and maintenance (O&M) units after the South Luzon O&M Group received its ISO 9001:2000 certification for quality management. In a ceremony held in Lucena City, Renato V. Navarrete, managing director of the certifying body Certification International Philippines (2nd from left), formally awarded the ISO certificate to the SLOM Group headed by asst. vice president Armando A. Buencamino. On hand to witness the awarding were, from left to right, TransCo's VP for HR, Administration and Finance Alexander B. Cortez, president and CEO Alan T. Ortiz, Ph.D., and VP for Luzon O&M Guillermo R. Redoblado. Since 2004, TransCo's regional O&M groups have been working for their respective ISO certifications. Visayas O&M received its ISO award on December 2004, followed by the North Luzon O&M in April 2005, and Mindanao O&M in August 2005.

CIC sprinkles visas on Christmas

THE CANADIAN IMMIGRATION Consultancy (CIC), the country's most reputable consulting firm, has showered the most memorable Christmas gift to its clients as 107 permanent resident visas were released in December, an infinite gift towards a truly rewarding life.

The visa grantees are comprised of financial managers, computer systems analysts and programmers, engineers, technical sales specialists, accountants, social workers, agriculturists, and social workers. Applicants from the medical field that includes dentists, medical technologists and nurses were also granted with visas. These professionals will now hold their ticket to one in a thousand opportunities.

The 107 principal applicants are expected to leave the country within the year together with their spouses and children. From January to June 2005, over 400 CIC clients were granted permanent resident visa, including 729 spouses and dependent children.

For over a decade, CIC has processed thousands of applicants that are now in the Canadian Embassy's priority lists. These include applications where screening has been completed and are now waiting for further notice from the embassy.

CIC offers various service packages that include 50% discount on standard consultancy fee. Clients are provided a complete range of services—from submission of application, correspondence with the Canadian Embassy, until their arrival in Canada. The service also includes enhancement of job description, document review, and proper encoding of application forms.

With the pass mark lowered to 67 points, from 75 points, single applicants and those without relatives in Canada may now qualify.

For more information and free assessment, visit www.go2canada.com.

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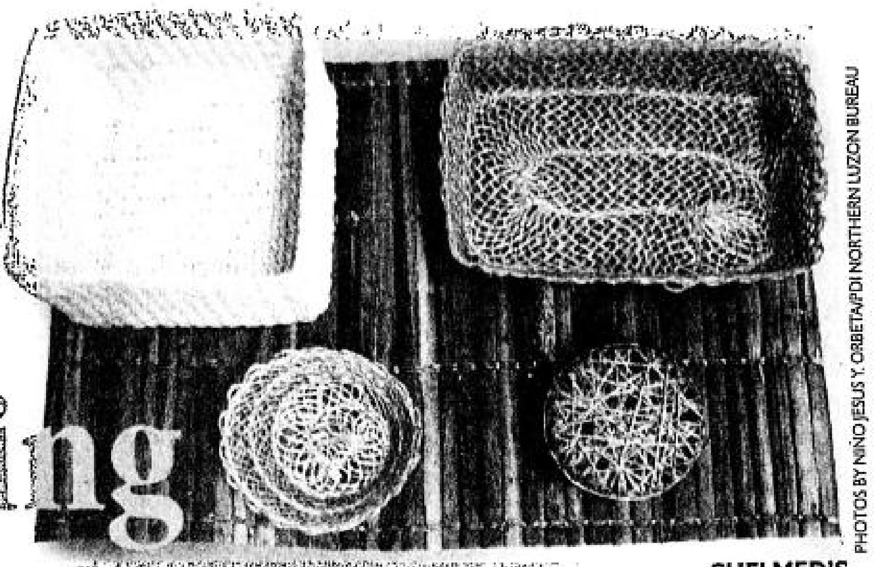
Sunday BIZ



PHOTOS BY NIÑO JESUS Y. ORBETA/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

SHELMED'S products figure prominently in many homes abroad.

Hardworking couple produce abaca treasures

DARAGA, ALBAY—SHELdon "Don" Villanueva's marriage to Mediatrix "Med" Vallejo in 1973 started the weaving of not only a long-term partnership but also a successful *abaca* craft enterprise.

The Vallejos, from Med's grandparents to her parents, are among the pioneers in the abaca industry here.

When Med's parents, Antonio Vallejo and Leticia Punsalan-Vallejo, decided to close down the family business, the newlyweds opted to put up the Shelmed Cottage Treasures.

Med, a 24-year-old teacher, and Don, a 24-year-old mechanical engineer, were probably the youngest exporters then.

The couple started Shelmed with an initial capitalization of P3,000 and three employees from the old Vallejo company, where Sheldon also worked as a technical assistant.

They started producing abaca placemats and doormats and later expanded their products into rattan and buri furniture, baskets and other handicrafts made from abaca fiber after securing a loan from a private financial institution.

Hard work

The couple initially supplied the previous clients of the Vallejos in the United States.

The Villanuevas worked hard to expand their business, ensuring that the workmanship and the quality of their products are top-rate, even for sub-contracted ones.

Shelmed focused on product development, studied current and prospective markets, joined groups and participated in international exhibitions to maintain its competency and relevance in the international market.

In 1976, Shelmed fulfilled its first big order worth $800,000 of bags from the Bicentennial of the US by sub-contracting with other exporters.

"I saw how my parents worked really hard, especially when we were young. They would be gone for really long periods, sometimes for 45 days since we were dealing with Europe. I saw how they had to develop markets for certain items," recalls Mesh Villanueva, the couple's eldest daughter and Shelmed's current marketing director.

One of the hurdles the business went through was when a Panamanian buyer did not pay a container-load of products in 1978. Fortunately, the products were rerouted to a New York buyer who helped them out.

Most valuable asset

Having worked with their employees for quite a long time now, the Villanuevas consider their employees their most valuable asset.

"We consider our employees part of the family and we are obliged to help them grow and develop their talents. We provide security for their dependents as well," says Med.

She considers Shelmed clients as friends and protects their interests by producing customized products and new items annually. To avoid competition, they cultivate only one client in a certain area.

Shelmed's products have included area rugs, placemats and dinette accessories, cushion and pillows, ribbons and fabrics and novelty items, among others.

The company combines abaca with other materials like wire, terracota, tin, paper, glass and leather and present them in twisted, braided or crocheted forms.

"We believe in customer retention through customer satisfaction. It is more cost-effective to retain a customer than gain a new one," Med adds.

Shelmed remains competitive in the export market through innovation, competitive pricing, good quality and fine relationship with its

HARDWORKING / B3

SHELMED remains competitive through continuous product innovation

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Sunday LIFESTYLE

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Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

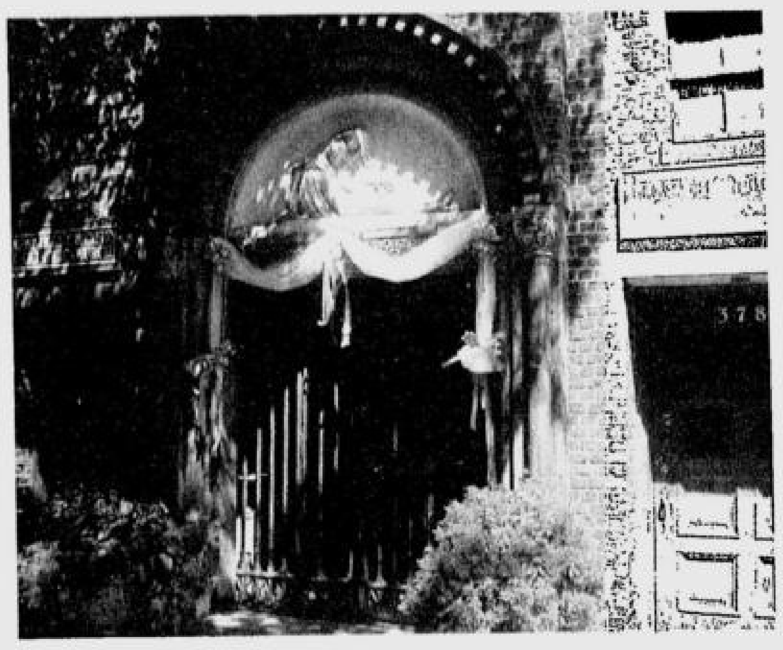
A Pinoy church in the Big Apple

By Catherine Sarah Young
Contributor

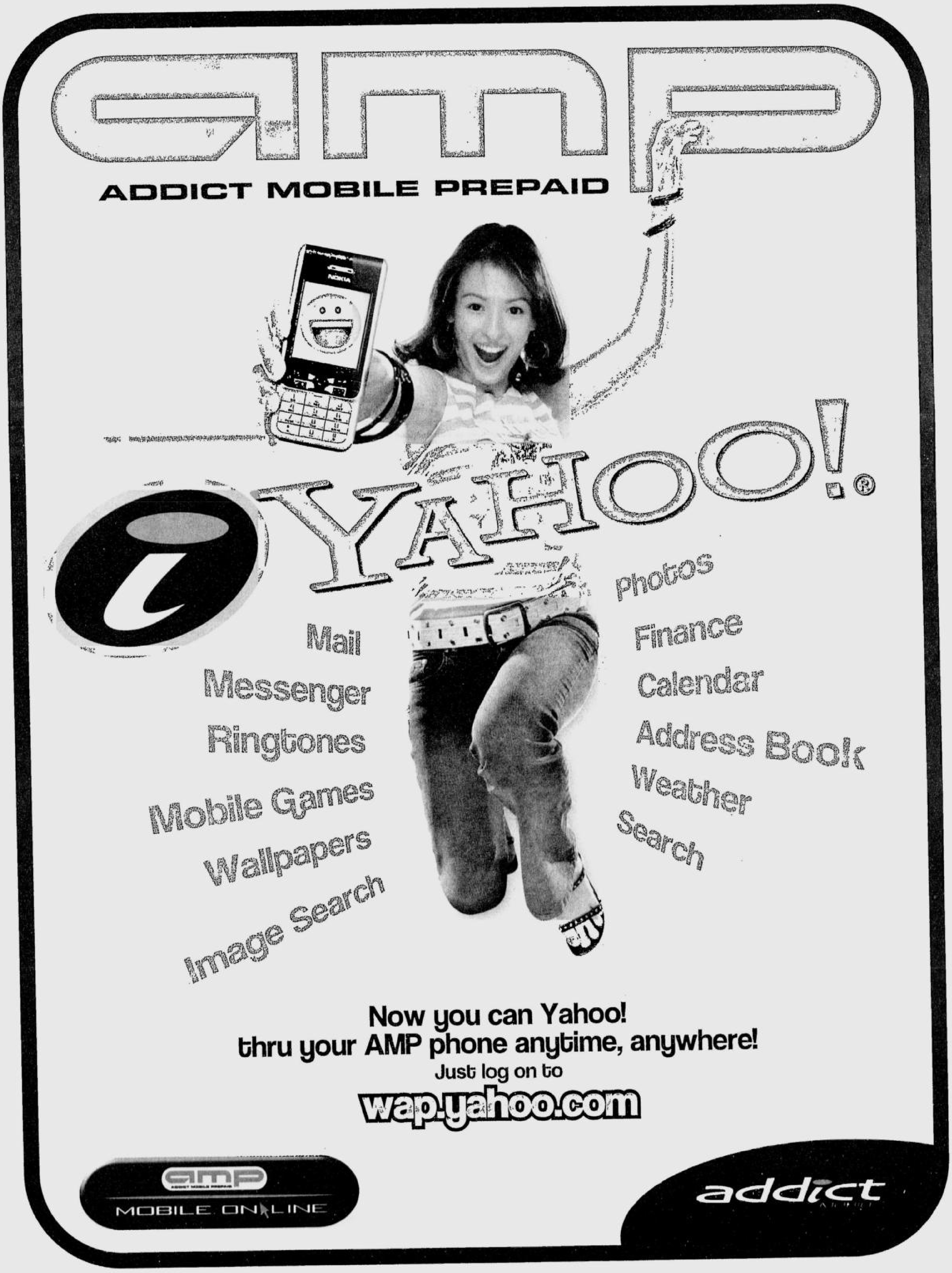
FILIPINOS ARE ALL over the globe. Pick a country, and there's bound to be a colony of Pinoys in there, be it on tour, to get an education or to earn a living.

And where Filipinos go, so does their faith. In September last year, the Chapel of San Lorenzo Ruiz on 378 Broome Street in Little Italy, New York, was designated as a church dedicated to Filipinos, the first in the United States and the second in the world, the first one having been designated in Rome by no less than the late Pope John Paul himself.

A PINOY/ C2



Casa de Lorenzo, the first Filipino chapel in US, finds its new home in Little Italy, New York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A Pinoy church in the Big Apple

From page C1

SYMBOL OF FAITH. Chapel on 378 Broome Street in Little Italy, New York, designated as place of worship especially for Filipinos, is named after Blessed Lorenzo Ruiz and is dedicated in honor of the late Jaime Cardinal Sin.

Fr. Erno Diaz, coordinator of the Filipino Apostolate of the Archdiocese of New York since 1995, has been appointed the director of the Filipino Apostolate of the chapel.

Not yet a parish church

"The Chapel of San Lorenzo Ruiz is the official name," says Fr. Diaz. "Any reference to 'church,' as in 'Church of the Filipinos' or 'Church of San Lorenzo Ruiz' is not accurate and premature inasmuch as it is not yet a parish church. It is hoped, though, it would be a parish church someday when the Chapel has become stable with its programs and its finances."

It took five years of formal lobbying to obtain the blessings of Cardinal Edward Egan, the Archbishop of New York, although "the seed for a church for the Filipinos was sown as far back as 1987 after San Lorenzo's canonization."

In 2002, Cardinal Egan visited the Philippine Pastoral Center (PPC) on East 62nd Street and told the Filipinos his intention of finding a church for St. Lorenzo Ruiz, the first Filipino saint.

In December 2003, the Cardinal offered the Church of St. James near Brooklyn Bridge for the Filipino church. However, the trustees of the PPC recommended that Fr. Diaz decline the offer since the chapel was badly in need of repair.

After two years, the Cardinal offered the Church of the Most Holy Crucifix, which was founded in 1925 and originally used by Irish, Italians, Spanish and Chinese immigrants. Fr. Diaz, with the consent of the PPC trustees, accepted the offer.

Migrant-saint

Why name the chapel after Lorenzo Ruiz? "Filipino Catholics of New York, especially the devotees of San Lorenzo, have always believed that the first Filipino saint should have a church with his name in New York," says Fr. Diaz.

"The movement for the canonization of San Lorenzo was quite strong and aggressive here where Filipinos rallied around then Blessed Lorenzo as a symbol of their Catholic faith."

Lorenzo Ruiz also served as an empathetic figure, having been martyred in Japan.

"Filipino immigrants saw in him a migrant-saint... whose experience of loneliness, alienation [and] rejection is similar to theirs in some ways. Also, like the old immigrant groups from Ireland, Italy, Poland and so forth, the Filipinos feel they need their patron saint to be in their midst to serve as their inspiration.

Hall of Sin

Another significant fact about the chapel is the dedication of the chapel hall in honor of the late Jaime Cardinal Sin, who played a pivotal role in the faith of Filipinos in the US.

He encouraged the movement for canonization of Blessed Lorenzo in New York; he celebrated mass in St. Patrick's Cathedral in 1984 to honor the figure. He also did the same to other states, such as New Jersey, to which many Filipinos have also migrated.

The hall will be used for community functions like prayer meetings, forums, Bible studies and several outreach programs, among them for the Chinese-Filipinos, the elderly, the youth and newcomers.

The masses will be held in both English and Tagalog, although if a particular regional group would like to have mass said in their dialect, it is possible to do so if there is a priest who can do the mass.

Fr. Diaz himself has celebrated the Eucharist in Ilonggo. Filipino celebrations such as Misa de Gallo, *salubong*, Flores de Mayo, etc., will also be held in the chapel.

Despite the Filipino label, everyone, regardless of race or religious affiliation, is welcome to the chapel to worship.

Fr. Diaz hopes the chapel "will serve to highlight the fact that the Filipinos finally have a place they can call their own where they can strengthen their faith and hand that same faith to their children even as they live in an adopted country and culture."

Victory

Securing the chapel is certainly a victory for Fr. Erno Diaz, who has been in New York for 28 years. Despite being in a foreign country, Fr. Diaz remains steadfast in his vocation to the diocese.

Pinoys in foreign lands have not forgotten their faith. "The Filipinos of New York look to their faith as a spiritual resource in a foreign country," the priest said. "Their faith is quite strong as evidenced by their strong presence and involvement in their parish churches. Some churches in New York have been saved from closure because of the presence of the Filipinos. Their faith is still very much like their countrymen's back home."

It is this faith that also keeps Fr. Diaz going. "There are beautiful things that gladden my heart, like the fruitful pursuit of a church for the Filipinos and the trust and encouragement of many supporters who believe in the pursuit. There have also been trials and obstacles along the way that I find to be God-sent opportunities to strengthen our resolve to keep on."

The Church is also expected to fire up further the Filipinos' missionary passion. "Filipinos are noted for their apostolic zeal. In their mission as evangelizers, trials are turned into blessings. I have learned this beautiful lesson from them."

E-mail the author at cathy_young1@yahoo.com

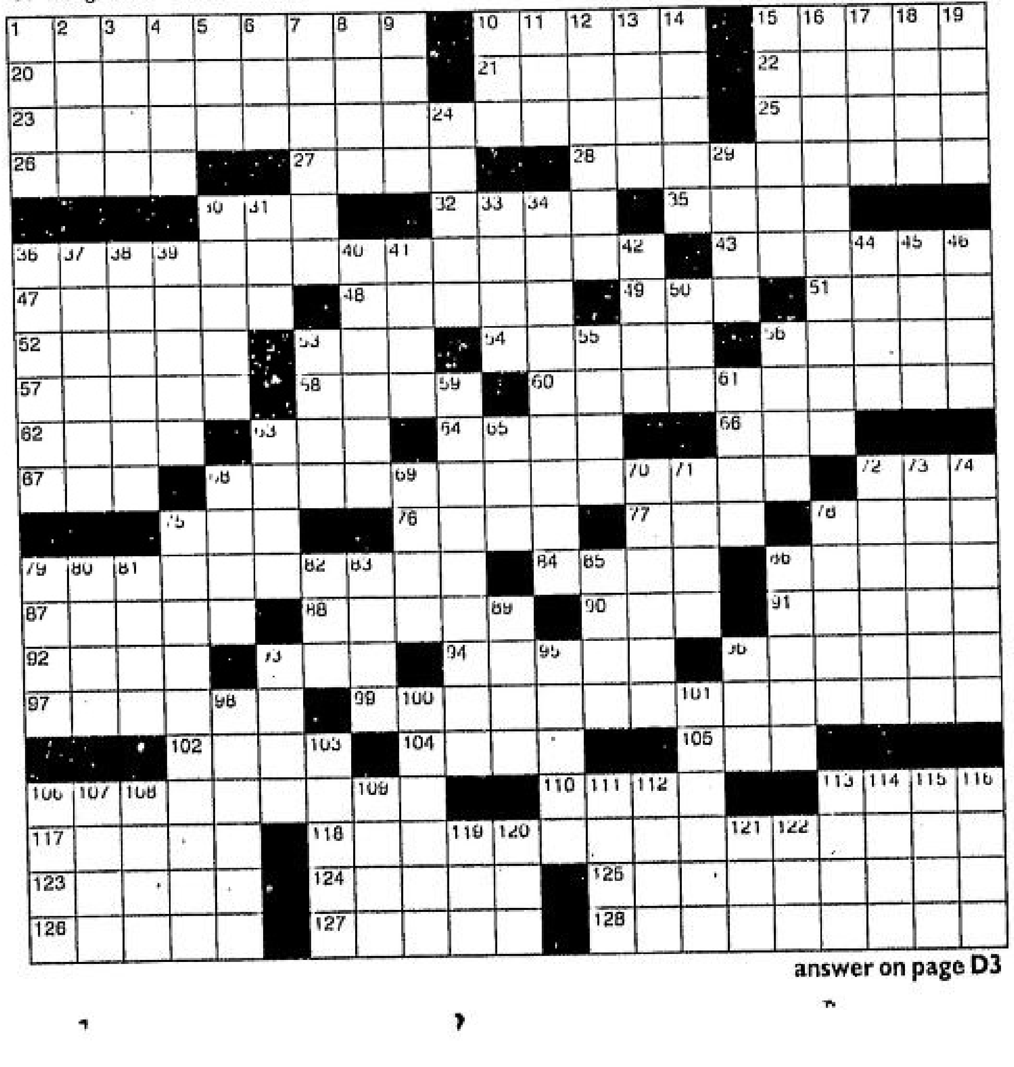
SUNDAY CROSSWORD

PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Longo

TESTAMENT

ACROSS
1 Unimportant enough to be skipped
10 Indian ruler
15 Soaked (in)
20 Oldest daughter on "The Waltons"
21 Usually harmless bacteria
22 Brief fight
23 Pioneering football coach
25 PC chip maker
26 Lease
27 Pliers, e.g.
28 British poet laureate, 1692-1715
30 Circle segment
32 Sol-do linkup
35 Neatnik's opposite
36 "Batman Forever" director
43 Unwilling
47 "Jurassic Park" actress Richards
48 O'Donnell of TV talk
49 Have
51 Trough filler
52 Espresso drink
53 Sixth sense
54 "Yabba- — -doo!"
56 Avoid artfully
57 Earthy hue
58 Look at
60 George Segal's "Where's Poppa?" co-star
62 Suffix of movie theaters
63 Kind of Buddhism
64 Alphabet opener
66 She bleats
67 "— out!" (ump's cry)
68 Charles Mason's surveying partner
72 "— 'er rip!"
75 Small fry
76 To be, in Brest
77 Pg. identifiers
78 Equivalent
79 2001 Grammy-winning violinist
84 Tabula —
86 Brazilian dance
87 Gourmand
88 "That's my story — sticking to it!"
90 Sheepish
91 Big brasses
92 Actress Elisabeth
93 Coppery
94 Tell
96 Tinker (with)
97 Wooed with a tune
99 Swimmer turned actress
102 Jazz jobs
104 "Love — the air"
105 Almond, e.g.
106 "The Seafarer" poet
110 Stretched tight
113 A U.S. possession
117 Intone
118 "Hill Street Blues" actor
123 John Wayne film
124 G-man, e.g.
125 Odd occurrences
126 Navel variety
127 Pop boy band
128 Rings out

DOWN
1 Epps or Sharif
2 Auntie of Broadway
3 Do a pressing job
4 Method: Abbr.
5 Poseidon's domain
6 Indisposed
7 Ink spot, e.g.
8 Jay of NBC
9 Carmaker Ferrari
10 Legal object
11 Play a part
12 Chachi's girl
13 Aquarium organism
14 Up times
15 Isaac of sci-fi
16 Preceded
17 "— boy!"
18 "Let it stand"
19 Drill mark
24 Paella pots
29 — Bator
30 Ed with seven Emmys
31 Panasonic rival
33 Part of DNA
34 Sagittarius
36 Decrepit car
37 Seer's sanctum
38 Any one of two
39 Paint base
40 Of bears
41 Pout
42 Gen. Lee, for short
44 Funnyman Foxx
45 — lily (Utah's flower)
46 Where Eve erred
50 Crib cry
53 Unendingly
55 Melville's "Billy —"
56 Dejected
59 Impatient people don't like to be placed on these
61 Storm and Tracker, once
63 Fraternity letter
65 Gin mill
68 Soup du —
69 Blend
70 Best — (award-winning dog)
71 Medical pic
72 Kappa follower
73 Mummify
74 Picks on
75 Betty MacDonald memoir
78 Iraqi's neighbor
79 Boxer Willard
80 Hawaiian island
81 Dumbfound
82 Lamb's call
83 Feminine suffix
85 Sci. of stars
86 Circus prop
89 Hawaiian fish, when doubled
93 Takeout order?
95 Streisand film
96 Winter ailment
98 Walk stealthily
100 Actor Poitier
101 Prologues
103 Khartoum's country
106 Repeat
107 China's — Enlai
108 Mouth off
109 Hounds
111 Open slightly
112 Eclectic bimonthly magazine
113 Big party
114 Part of ICU
115 To — (precisely)
116 Fail to notice
119 Hotel
120 And so on: Abbr.
121 I love, to Caesar
122 Ryder rental



answer on page D3

PENINSULA Manila chair PL Lim (seated, center) with PNB chair Flor Tarriela, Bishop Joel Baylon and benefactor, former Malacañang executive secretary Ruben Torres. Standing: lawyer Jose Malang of PCSO, Tony Medina, Rona Sampang, lawyer Ed Tarriela, Justice Leo Quisumbing, former Justice Secretary Silvestre Bello III, lawyer Jose Yulo and Enerico Sampang

Be 'outrageously blessed' in 2006

PURELY PERSONAL

Josephine Darang

GOD LOVES CATHOLIC prayer Community founder Robert Castañeda will discuss "How to be outrageously blessed" at 7:30 p.m., starting Jan. 11 and every second Wednesday thereafter, at the Sacro Costato Retreat House, 9 Scout Lozano, Quezon City. Praise and worship, with Holy Mass, will precede the session.

Bro. Robert, a pastoral team worker of God Loves, experienced God's small miracles in his life when he gave up his jewelry business and concentrated on forming future God Loves members through Life in the Spirit seminars (LSS) and praise and worship on Wednesday evenings.

God's providence

Robert follows what he preaches. In the years that he didn't have a business, he trusted that the Lord would provide. He did!

Bro. Robert baked cakes and sold "Chicken Soup for the Soul" books distributed by Emerald Communications owned by Christy Aspiras.

In the 15th year of God Loves, things are back to normal. Robert is now in partnership with Raffy Florencio selling Technomarine watches.

God Loves will hold its celebration 1:30-7 p.m., Jan. 29, at the Big Tent, 1 Ligaya St., Holy Spirit Drive, Isidora Hills, Quezon City.

On Jan. 28, a Catholic Life in the Spirit seminar will be held 8 a.m.-7 p.m., at Sacro Costato. Text Bro. Robert at 0917-5301213.

The vision of God Loves is to develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The community has 80 active members led by a pastoral team composed of Robert Castañeda, Filaine Tan, Jesse Santos and Ricky Berenguer. Fr. Domie Guzman, SPC, is the spiritual director.

In charge of worship are Gener Siriban, Sonny Cadiz, Rod Simon Paul Almendras and Janet Erespe. Henry Peñalosa plays the drums in the choir.

Tent for the Lord

God Loves will build a "tent for the Lord" (chapel) behind the five-bedroom house the community is renting at 84 10th St. New Manila, QC. It will take some time. God Loves will occupy its new house as soon as it is ready. In the meantime, it invites people to join the LSS and rediscover Jesus and be empowered by His spirit.

Exhibit

The Sto. Niño de Buena Obra owned by Nila Almoradie of Cavite City will join the "Fiesta del Sto. Niño" exhibit at the Philippine National Bank Financial Center, Jan. 19-27. The image at the house of Aling Nila on 554 Rafael Palma St., Cavite City is invoked for healing of the sick. Call (046)5040472 anytime from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. or text 0921-4125478. Aling Nila goes into a trance when she is healing.

Registration

The Congregacion del Santissimo Nombre del Niño Jesus will register Sto. Niño images 9 a.m.-7 p.m., Jan. 16-18, at the PNB Long Gallery.

Enthronement of the "Nombre" and first day of novena is Jan. 19 at 4 p.m. Novena Masses are at 7 p.m., Jan. 20-27. Procession is at 3 p.m., Jan. 29, from Philtrade on Roxas Boulevard to Quirino Grandstand at Rizal Park where a solemn High Mass will be celebrated.

More funds needed

The Peninsula Manila chair PL Lim hosted a dinner for Masbate Bishop Joel Baylon to raise more funds for the St. Anthony de Padua Cathedral. Guests included benefactors: former Malacañang Executive Secretary Ruben Torres; former Justice Secretary Silvestre Bello III; lawyer Jose Yulo; lawyer Jose Malang, representing Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office general manager Rosario Uriarte; Philippine National Bank chair Flor Tarriela with husband lawyer Ed Tarriela; San Miguel Corp. vice president for agri-business Greg Ellescas, Jr.; Philippine State College of Aeronautics president Enerico Sampang with wife Rona; and Supreme Court Justice Leo Quisumbing, who has inspired many fundraising events. Tony Medina, former Masbate vice governor, coordinated the dinner.

The Masbate Cathedral is 51 years old and showed wear and tear for many years until the Project Cathedral Wings spearheaded the restoration in 2002. Though P25 million was raised, the complete restoration project left a debt of P5 million, half of which the San Antonio de Padua Society was able to raise. Those who want to help may text Tony Medina at 0906-2283750.

Getting fired up for the Year of the Fire Dog

CLIFFHOUSE Tagaytay is an upscale boutique restaurant and retail complex no more than 2 km from the Tagaytay rotonda.

TESSA!

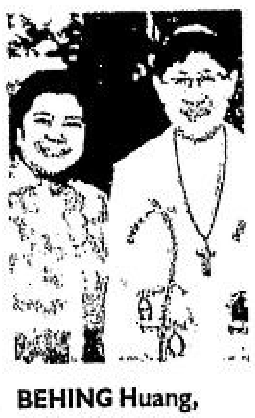
Tessa Prieto-Valdes

HAPPY NEW YEAR! BUT only if you're not Chinese! Today, just like yesterday, we are still in the Year of the Rooster, of course. Many thanks to the reader who e-mailed me the correction to last week's article, where I wrote that the Year of the Monkey has been so topsy-turvy for our family, what with **Dennis'** helicopter accident in January followed by **Athena's** successful, healthy birth in May.

I must have been so dizzy with all the festive merriment and sneakingly sipping little bits of champagne over Christmas that I got so confused with my Chinese animal signs. Thanks to a quick check with the online encyclopedia, Wikipedia, and verification with a second source at www.chinesefortunecalendar.com, I now know that the Year of the Wood Monkey ended many months ago—on Feb. 8, 2005.

For those of us who like Chinese astrology, this year, the Year of the Wood Rooster, is still going strong until it ends on Jan. 28, 2006. The Chinese New Year will then usher in the Year of the Fire Dog.

The confusion started, of course, because the January heli incident was actually at the end of the Monkey year. So much for trying to blend Eastern astrology with the Western calendar! Confirming with my husband, Dennis, was a wrong move even though his mother's maiden name is Ongpin. Unfortunately, he can't remember any of his Chinese language lessons from the years he spent in Hong Kong.



BEHING Huang, chair of the Federation of Philippine Photographers Association, Bishop Chito Tagle

Pyromania

New Year's celebrations, whether Chinese or Western, are always associated with fireworks and last week saw a fantastic, weeklong display at the World Pyro Olympics held at the Esplanade behind the SM Mall of Asia in Pasay City.

Among the millions of generic holiday texts I received, I got one from **Katrina Tuason** inviting me to watch the world's first fireworks competition with 10 countries showcasing their explosive best. Being a certified fireworks addict, I planned to catch at least one night. I became a convert ever since my uncle **Mauro Prieto**'s annual New Year's homemade presentations in Baguio City while we were growing up. Back then, we were thrilled just to draw our names in the air with sparklers, getting intoxicated with the smell of gunpowder and half-deaf with the sound of the "Judas' belt."

For my youngest brother **Paolo Prieto's** wedding, my sisters and I arranged with **Joey Teotico** of Starmaker (tel. 0917-8469444) a magnificent show over the Tagaytay Midlands Clubhouse, as the band Time and a Half played its first set. The weather miraculously cleared just before the dinner started and the fog just disappeared. It was one of the most romantic moments of any wedding I have been to.

After getting feedback from a friend about the long walk and killer traffic around the Mall of Asia complex, I decided to get a room at the Westin Philippine Plaza. Thanks to my fashion guru **Rajo Laurel**, we got to see Germany and Korea entries from the balcony of Room 1044.

With a busload of my kids and their cousins, our room went through a storm with all of them having pillow fights and wrestling on the bed between the shows. The German entry was awesome. Shooting up to the sky from a barge at sea, aerial blooming flowers, magenta waves and flickering white stars were simultaneously glittering in the black sky. It's wonderful that the Department of Tourism supported shows like this.

The only major setback about fireworks is the pollution they emit and the terrible smell of gunpowder. So every year instead of spending it in the city, we head toward Tagaytay so the kids are spared from the pollutants.

Tagaytay scene

Tagaytay Highlands is an amazing development where they have built a whole resident community overlooking picturesque Taal Volcano. Whenever I have a foreign visitor over, I am so proud to show them that part of our country.

Over on the other side of the ridge, along Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo Highway, is another new tourist destination called Cliffhouse. This new, classy, boutique restaurant and retail complex located two kilometers from the Tagaytay City Rotonda is a multi-use facility with an expansive open deck offering an unimpeded panoramic view of Taal Volcano.

The view from there is breathtaking and reminded me of our Greek holiday in Santorini Island (just minus the gorgeous-looking Greek men). Already open in the complex are Fire Lake Grill, a continental fine-dining restaurant by chef **Paul Huang**, and Buon Giorno, a casual Italian café and family bistro by food stylist **Linda Floro** and her hubby, photographer **Mark Floro**.

Still nursing 8-month-old Athena, I am still carnivorous and enjoying all forms of meat so the Fire Lake Grill is on my food list since they serve Certified Black Angus steaks. But aside from all the exciting restaurants, Cliffhouse also has Domicillo, a retail store of furniture and home furnishings by renowned designer **Rene Alcala**. So do check out this new fashionable complex in the middle of the ridge's vibrant restaurant row.

Speaking of steaks, the best-kept secret (though not a secret anymore) is the chilled, prime-grade beef supplied by Bacchus Foods owner **Alex Lichaytoo** (tel. 8921744). The meat slabs are flown in chilled from the American Midwest and are the best quality possible. I will miss eating this when I become a veggie again!

Pro-Pinoy

This New Year, aside from losing my remaining post-natal fat and getting into a healthier lifestyle, I have decided to be even more pro-Filipino and support more events showcasing our country.

On Jan. 5, I will don authentic Mangyan vestments for the opening of "Myth and Meaning"—an exhibit about the culture of the indigenous peoples of Mindoro. This exhibit at the Ayala Museum will run until Jan. 23, so do come and experience our heritage.

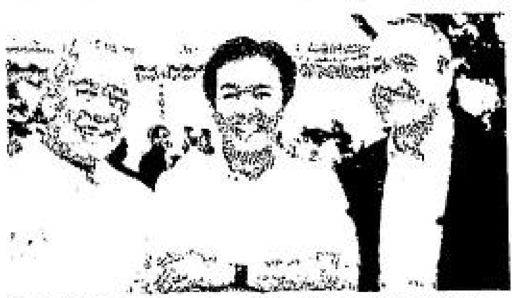
At the opening, guests will be able to view the first displays of artifacts from different Mangyan groups and be able to learn to write their name in an original Philippine script. I am just too excited to add their colorful accessories to my collection. And I will wear them proudly this year!

E-mail the author at seaprincess@inquirer.com.ph

INSIDE Cliffhouse Tagaytay, large terra-cotta pots with fresh poinsettias surround the courtyard and shops.

CEREMONIAL ringing of the bells by Tagaytay City Mayor Abraham Tolentino and wife, Dr. Agnes Tolentino; and Presidential Management Staff Chief, Secretary Rigoberto Tiglao

FORMER Tagaytay City Mayor Francis Tolentino and Unilab scion Jeffrey Campos



ARTIST Malang, My Philippines owner Sari Ortega and Dennis Green

MALAYSIAN Skeet Shooting Team to the SEA Games

GOOD friends Len Cabili, Chandra Sondra, Akiko Thompson and dad, Mr. Marsh

EIGHT-MAN string ensemble of the Manila Symphony Orchestra performs Christian and popular classics on a promontory overlooking Taal Lake.

GREGGY Licaros, Tagaytay Vice Mayor Virgilio Ambion, Dee C. Chuan and Sons EVP and GM Alvin Dee, Mark Licaros, chef/owner of Penang Hill

DEE C. Chuan and Sons Inc. director Jonathan Dee

CLIFFHOUSE architect Dave Rivera and wife

CLIFFHOUSE Tagaytay restaurateurs and shopowners Rene Alcala, chef Paul Huang, Tony Cancio, Linda Floro, Vincent Co and Bryan Dy

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Will his love remain unrequited?

EMILY'S POST

Emily A. Marcelo

DEAR EMILY,

I've been fascinated with someone in the workplace. The good thing about this fascination is that it allows me to breathe fresh air in a suffocating working environment.

I haven't had a crush on anyone these past two years. My two attempts at "love" were unrequited.

He's extremely good looking. We work on the same floor but he doesn't know me. We keep different hours and are assigned in different departments. He takes calls while I check/write business letters. Most of the girls in the office have a huge crush on him.

I dare not show how much I like him since I'm not sure if he prefers "straight-acting gay men." I don't think I can stand office rumors.

I attempted to "reach out" to him. I sent anonymously a brochure of foreign films and wrote a short note. I even planned to create a new e-mail account, using a different nickname. Perhaps we could be friends via e-mail then I would slowly reveal my true identity and admit that I like him.

But these things are stupid. A gay guy like me will not find it easy to approach a guy and invite him to dinner or to hang out.

My other concern is that he might turn out to be straight, thus, my romantic wish will not come true. Isn't it so stupid that I could even imagine the two of us dating, suspending reality to give way to fantasy?

I am 25 years old. I don't need anyone to support me and does not have support anyone. But, despite believing that happiness is a lot of things not just romantic love, I still wish that I'll find someone to love me that I could love in return. I'm tired of being a cat chasing a mouse.

Did my letter make any sense? I hope it did.

MR. INVISIBLE

Ain't life a grind! Rest assured that your misery is not exclusive to gays. Straights suffer the same fate, so stop bitching like you have a monopoly on that kind of pain. The only difference is, some gays develop a chip on their shoulder after they are rejected, believing that their "differing" sexuality repelled the object of their desire.

Try to make friends with this guy and get to know him very well first. Any gay or straight needs a friend. Set romance aside for the time being. It will come when it comes. Don't rush it.

You may even find out you do not like him at all once you get to know him. If he turns out to be a nice person, try not to smother him. Give him plenty of room to breathe. Something wonderful and long-lasting may blossom if you do.

Regarding your aversion to "office rumors," is this because the people you're working with are still homophobic at this time and age? I don't expect elderly people to open their minds and get rid of this age-old phobia of a lifestyle other than theirs.

But your co-workers in this office are probably young, college-educated and street-smart. Are their minds constipated? With the proliferation of cable channels presenting this and that and everything else possible to show, I am quite surprised that the intellectual capacity of some has not really advanced.

Apparently, many have just latched on to the latest fashion and accepted open promiscuity among straights. But their tolerance index for gays remain unchanged. Tsk, tsk, sad isn't it?

If this is any consolation to you, humans are not the only gays on this planet. Just watch nature shows and see how animals in the wild have had same sex partners over the centuries.

Humans have not invented or are they practicing anything new at all. This goes for everything else we dislike in ourselves—envy, greed, sycophancy, promiscuity, polygamy, bribery—etc., etc. It's all in nature!

Don't take my word for it. Watch animals on television. They're mind-blowing and totally fascinating.

In the spirit of the new year, let's flush out bigotry from our systems and try to practice accommodation and tolerance of lifestyles different from what's considered as normal and acceptable. Only then can we have some semblance of harmony and peace. Life is too short to be judgmental!

Send your e-mail to emarcelo@inquirer.com.ph, Subject: Lifestyle, or send your letters to INQUIRER. Listen to Ms. Marcelo co-host the program "Kalikasan Vigilante," 7:15-8:30 p.m., Monday-Friday, on dwBR 104.3 FM.

Flower arrangement seminar begins Jan. 11

A SERIES OF SEMINAR-WORKSHOPS on plants and flowers for business, wellness and pleasure will be conducted by Ikebana professor Serapion S. Metilla 1-6 p.m. starting Jan. 11 at Mett's Plant Arts, King Louis Garden Center, Manila Seedling Bank cor. Edsa and Quezon Avenue, Quezon City.

On Jan. 11-15, the seminar will be on Flower Arrangement with Flowershop Operation. It will cover Ikebana, Western and free styles, garland-making, buffet centerpieces, sourcing of materials, corsage-making, bridal bouquet-making, etc.

All materials will be provided, including scissors, vases, flowers, foliage, tapes, ribbons, wires.

Sessions on cement pot-making for bonsai, dish gardens, catch basin for water fills, water plants and other ornamentals will be held Jan. 21-22. Materials will be provided.

Tray landscaping, terrarium making and care and maintenance of plants indoors will be taught Jan. 29. All materials will be provided, including cement tray, fishbowl, potting medium, charcoal, moss, assorted plants, pebbles, rocks and other accessories.

Participants get snacks, handouts and certificates.

Advance registration is required. Senior citizens will get a 10-percent discount by presenting their ID. Call 9394593, 4352479, 0917-8321352, or e-mail mettsplants@yahoo.com.ph.

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Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

RENEWAL OF VOWS. Some of the officers and members of Congregacion del Santisimo Nombre del Niño Jesus

Love of country is Sto. Niño fiesta message

THE CONGREGACION DEL Santisimo Nombre del Niño Jesus, which is celebrating its 28th anniversary, is calling for everyone to look to the Child Jesus as guiding light in these hard times.

The Sto. Niño's eight values—simplicity, humility, obedience, respect, trust, docility, reconciliation and honesty—will be the core message of this year's Fiesta del Sto. Niño to be held Jan. 19-29 at the PNB Financial Center. This year's theme is "O Niño Hesus, Patnubay ng Pilipinas."

As in any Filipino fiesta, the Fiesta del Sto. Niño is made possible through the support of its *hermanas* and *hermanos mayores*, namely Louie and Mellie Ablaza, Nene Aguinaldo and Grace Jose, Roberto and Marisse Baes, Rey and Evelyn Castro, Sam and Chita Chen, Huan Yan and Norma Chan, Ed and Fe de Guia, Vicky Garcia, William and Mila How, Renato and Vicky Magadia, Milagros Mangiliman, Marietta Paredes, Johnny and Carol Rogge, Ernesto and Chichi Salas, Marcosa Sanchez, Paulino and Nelly Tan, Oscar and Bootsie Violago, Marilou Dimaculangan and family, and David and Cora Yu.

This year's officers are Ben Farrales (founding chair), Ogee Atos (president), Noli Hans (vice president), Jing Chua (chair of the board), Jesse Nell (secretary), Mel Chionglo (treasurer), Totoy Bayabo, Donnie Delima, Jess Salgado, Dingdong Bautista, Germs Malabanan, Chito Ilagan, Rommel Elepano, Mario Buela, Steve de Leon, Art Borja, Venson Nobrera, Deo Pamilar, Rev. Fr. Leopoldo Juacian S.V.D., Rev. Fr. Alfredo Sabado, Manolo Estrella, Terry Layacan, Ricky Miranda and Dennis Maturan.

Sto. Niño devotees and others interested to join the Fiesta del Sto. Niño 2006 should register on Jan. 16-28, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., at the 3rd floor of the PNB Long Gallery. The exhibit will be held in the PNB Financial Center at Roxas Boulevard, Pasay.

Schedule is as follows: Jan. 19, 4 p.m.—Enthronement of "Nombre Ang Patron," first day of Novena Mass, ribbon cutting/opening of the exhibit and blessing of Sto. Niño images; Jan. 20-27—viewing 9:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily, Novena Masses at 7 p.m. and the last viewing hour at 8-9 p.m.; Jan. 28, exhibit last day, 9:30 a.m. to 12 noon, the egress (pullout of images) at 1 p.m. and Anticipated Mass at 7 p.m.; Jan. 29, *carroza* formation/grand procession from PNB Center to the Luneta grandstand at 3 p.m. to be followed by *ati-atihan* exhibition and fireworks display.

CONGREGACION'S patron, "Nombre," at Capilla de Sto. Niño at Violago compound

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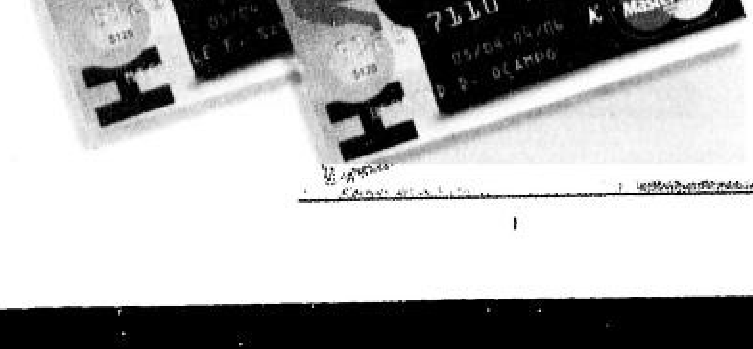


Philippines a 'wow' in Land of the Morning Calm

Text and photos by Belle V. Bondoc

KOREAN TOURISTS ARE COMING TO the Philippines in droves. And they aren't just holiday seekers, students or honeymooners, according to the Department of Tourism. Special interest groups like golfers and divers, as well as festival enthusiasts, have also started to discover the Philippines.

And DOT wants to keep them interested. The department had its eye set on these special interest groups when it participated in the Fourth International Hotels and Resorts Road Show in Seoul and Busan recently.

The four-day event was attended by over 300 Korean travel agents. The Philippine delegation consisted of key officials of top travel associations, representatives of the Philippine Airlines and the Department of Tourism headed by Sec. Joseph "Ace" Durano, with the "Team Korea" led by Maricon Basco-Ebron.

Even before the event, the DOT's vigorous and aggressive campaign to lure Korean tourists had already produced pretty impressive figures.

Korea dislodged Japan as the Philippines' top tourist market in Asia, with tourist arrivals totaling 349,093 for the first three quarters of 2005. The Japanese registered 313,101; China, 249,683; and Australia, 66,006.

Durano said tourist arrivals from Korea posted a 28.5-percent growth in 2005 compared to the tourist arrivals for the same period in 2004, giving the country an 18.3 market share. It made Korea the second largest source of tourist traffic after the United States.

The secretary said the Philippine tourism's achievements were noticed by the World Tourism Organization. He said the DOT had actively participated in different trade fairs and consumer promotions worldwide. The Fourth International Road Show was DOT's last hooray for 2005, after successfully participating in the World Travel Mart in London, the International Travel Fair in Taipei and the Shanghai-Philippines Tourism Conference in China.

Fruitful year

"Year 2005 was indeed a fruitful one for Philippine tourism," said Basco-Ebron. The DOT had won awards in Korea's major travel fairs. Team Korea won Best Booth Design and Best Country Performance Awards in the 18th Korea World Travel Fair (Kotfa) held in June 2005. In the Tour Expo Daegu 2005, it bagged the Best Promotion Award. The team won Best Booth Design, Best Booth Operations and Best Folklore Performance awards in the Busan International Travel Fair.

TOURISM Sec. Joseph "Ace" Durano addressing Korean agents

Korea has dislodged Japan as the Philippines' top tourist market in Asia

Basco-Ebron said the Hotels and Resorts Road Show, now on its fourth year, was a big marketing event the DOT could not afford to pass up. Korean travel agents and tour operators went to the road show to shop for a whole range of services—from holiday and honeymoon packages to adventure diving tours, conventions and incentive travels.

The 21 Philippine hotels and resorts that participated in the road show included Diamond Hotel Phils., Makati Shangri-La Manila, The Westin Philippine Plaza, Club Paradise, El Rio y Mar, Dos Palmas Arreceffi Island Resort, El Nido Resorts, the Alegre Beach Resort, Badian Island Resort, Hilton Cebu Resort and Spa, Maribago Bluewater Beach Resort, Sumilon Bluewater Beach Resort, Shangri-La's Mactan Island Resort and Spa, Bohol Beach Club, Philippine Island Divers of Alona Beach (Bohol), Boracay Regency Resort, Patio Pacific Boracay, the Marco Polo Davao, and the Pearl Farm Beach Resort.

Also represented were Southeast Asian Airlines (Seair) and the Pinatubo Spa Town (Pinatubo Development Corporation).

Enthusiastic

Sales and marketing managers brought promotional materials and marketing paraphernalia and tour operators, agents and Korean travelers seemed very enthusiastic about what the Philippines has to offer.

The reaction indicated that spas had become major draws in addition to diverse marine attractions, beaches and family resorts.

During the press conference at Lotte Hotel in Seoul, guests asked how Philippine spas were different from those in other parts of the world. The questions indicated a keen interest in *hilot*, the traditional Filipino massage. The use of virgin coconut oil in massage and its benefits were also of great interest to the audience.

Evidently, spa services are major draws. Not surprisingly, most hotels and resorts in the Philippines are now offering spa facilities.

Durano was pleased by the feedback at the road show. "We are very happy with the [response] we get from our Korean partners. Thus, we are challenged to improve our (services) even more," he added.

More investments

This year, the DOT will engage in marketing activities such as bus advertisements and consumer-based websites designed primarily to attract holiday-seekers, honeymooners and students.

Durano pledged further investment in promotions and participation in trade and consumer events. He said DOT would also focus on festival enthusiasts like divers and golfers and convention organizers. "Our cities, home to some of the world's finest hotels and resorts, are almost just two hours away from our best dive spots and beach resorts," he said.

The secretary added, "We are also promoting the Philippines as an ideal destination for meetings, incentive travels, conventions and exhibitions."

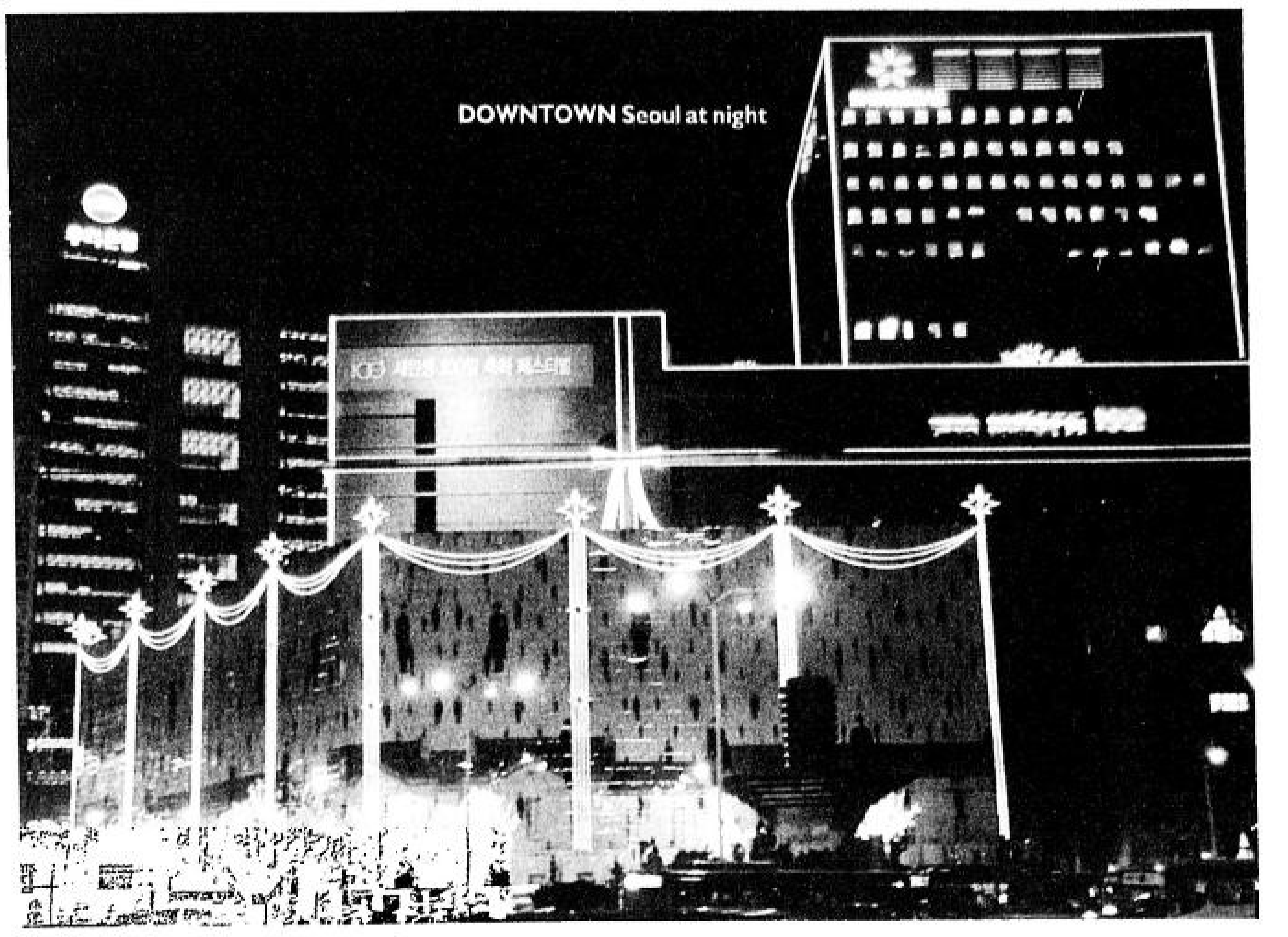
The DOT is even conducting a Korean language course through which it invites Korean students to study in the Philippines. The course is also offered to Filipino tour guides and other frontliners of the Philippine tourism industry to give them a better understanding of Korean culture and to enable them to communicate more effectively with Korean visitors. This will also make Korean visitors feel more at home while in the Philippines.

Durano said the opening of a tourism office at the Hotel President in Seoul last September strengthened the friendship between the Philippines and Korea. "The opening of our tourism office demonstrates our interest in servicing our Korean travelers and enables us to work closely with our partners here in Korea," he added.

Durano expressed optimism the DOT could reach tourism receipts of US$4.5 billion by 2010.

Meanwhile, Durano announced that Davao would host the 25th Asean Tourism Forum (ATF), a travel trade fair, Jan. 13-21.

E-mail the author at bbondoc@inquirer.com.ph


DOWNTOWN Seoul at night

MUST-SEE in Seoul: the Deoksugung Palace

KOREAN tour operators flocking to the road show booths

SECRETARY HON. JOSEPH H. DURANO
MEDIA BRIEFING
The 4th Hotels & Resorts Road Show
Philippine Airlines
MARICON Basco-Ebron, head of Team Korea (seated, left), and Sec. Joseph Durano with Philippine Airlines executives and representatives of travel associations

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Tropical oasis

THE NEW BORACAY TROPICS Resort Hotel, blending Mediterranean and modern Asian architecture and interiors, has opened. Just a few steps from the beach, it has 50 guest rooms with private balconies. Call the Manila office at 6871465/0921-4718388; and the Boracay office at (036) 2883700 or e-mail boracaytropic@yahoo.com.

Memorable

HKTB aims to give visitors a totally satisfying and memorable experience during 2006 Discover Hong Kong Year. Travelers can use the HKTB's DiscoverHongKong.com website to plan their trip and select activities. They can download the Hong Kong Leisure Guide for Business Travelers.

The 2006 Discover Hong Kong Year Bonus Guide features discounts at shops, restaurants, tour operators and attractions, as well as public-transport guide. HKTB has adopted the Quality Tourism Services (QTS) scheme for shops to help visitors.

For women

FORTY-THREE PERCENT of business travelers are women and 75 percent of travel decisions are made by females—at least in the United States, which accounts for a significant number of business travelers to the Philippines. Oakwood Premier Ayala Center offers a number of services and facilities specially designed to cater to women's needs.

Among others, a limited number of entrances ensures closer security monitoring. Front-desk staff will escort visitors to their rooms when requested and automatically screen calls after a certain hour. Moreover, entrances, hallways and other public areas are monitored 24/7 by closed-circuit television monitors. Visit www.oakwood.com.ph or call 7298888.

Living in a nature 'reserve'

Anvaya Cove, a 320-ha leisure community development, in Morong, Bataan, is one of the most nature-rich areas in the country. Near the Subic Bay Freeport, Anvaya boasts of three coves and rolling hills with mango trees and other plants and animals. At Anvaya, people can interact freely with nature. Trained staff and professionals will guide guests and residents in exploring the various sea and land ecosystems. Hiking paths and biking trails wind through Anvaya Cove's rich forests and water systems. Part of Anvaya's main cove is a nesting site for *pawikan*, Philippine sea turtles. Another section hosts migratory mallards or ducks. Anvaya Cove is a development project of Ayala Land Premier. Call 7287000 or 8923333, e-mail anvayacove@ayalaland.com.ph or visit www.anvayacove.com. You may also visit the Makati marketing showroom at Greenbelt 2 Garden, near Italianni's restaurant and Segafredo café.

World's best sandbox

By Butch Jimenez

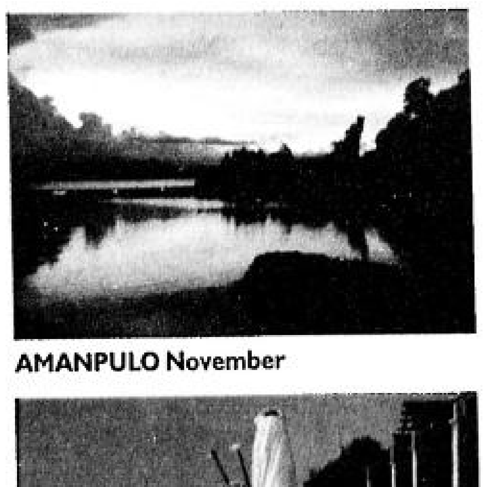
FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS, I'VE come out with the "World's Best Sandbox Calendar." But while the pictures change, the objective remains—to take my kids all around the Philippines so they will realize what a beautiful country we have. And as every picture shows, the Philippines is the world's best sandbox.

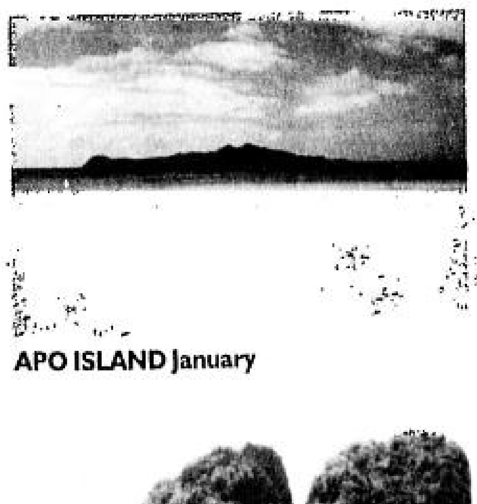
Unfortunately, there are just too many beautiful beaches and not much time to showcase all. But as every year passes, I hope to cover every spectacular nook and cranny of the Philippines and feature it in my calendar.

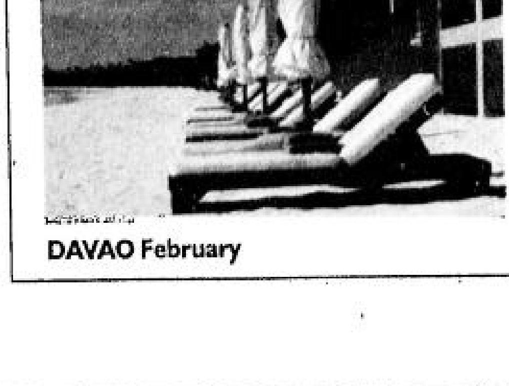
If you want more information on a particular beach, you can visit my blog at butchgjimenezblogspot.com. You can't admire our country's beauty from pictures. It's best admired up close and personal. So pack your sunblock and head for the beach.

Because as we have learned, no matter what problems may beset our nation, nothing beats living in the world's best sandbox.

For a free copy of the calendar, e-mail butchgjimenez@yahoo.com


AMANPULO November

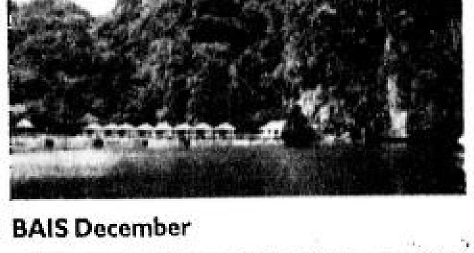

APO ISLAND January


DAVAO February

EL NIDO March

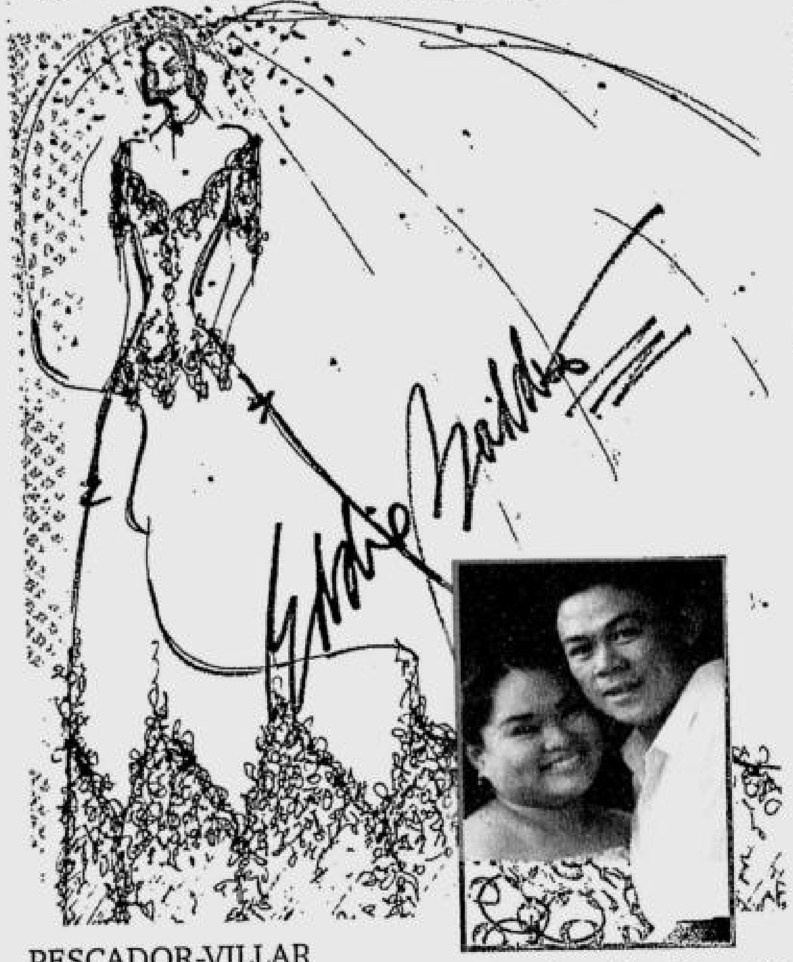
DUMAGUETE May

PALAWAN June


BAIS December

Milestones

We welcome announcements of weddings and engagements. Submit names of engaged couple, names of parents, date and place of wedding, and gown designer along with a photo of the couple and a sketch of the bridal gown, if any, to the INQUIRER, *P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City. E-mail to lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph. A photo of the bride and groom is required if the wedding has already taken place. Announcements will be printed depending on space availability and at no cost to the senders.*



PESCADOR-VILLAR

Ludwig Pescador, son of Sto. Tomas, Pangasinan, Vice Mayor **Wilfredo** and **Luzviminda Pescador**, will marry **Marie Antonnette Villar**, only daughter of Undersecretary **Antonio Villar Jr.** and Sto. Tomas Mayor **Vivien Villar**, Jan. 12, at Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati. Reception follows at the grand ballroom of Mandarin Oriental Manila in Makati City. Principal sponsors will be led by President **Macapagal-Arroyo** and **Eduardo Cojuangco Jr.**

The bride will wear a princess-cut fully calladoed piña gown embellished with caviar and glass beads, designed and executed by **Eddie Baddeo**. Baddeo also made the bridal entourage in jewel colors motif. **Eric Maningat** of Studio 546 will do the bride's hair and makeup. Concept and overall direction by **Raymond Villanueva** and flowers by **Nathan de Leon** of All About Flowers.

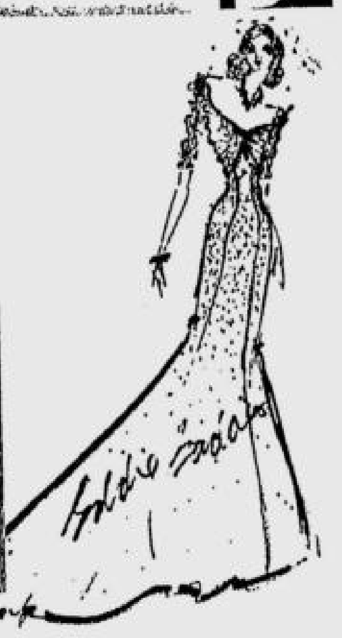
RIVERA-GARCIA

Raymond Rivera, son of retired judge Pedro C. Rivera and Patria T. Rivera, recently wed **Karen Garcia,** daughter of Celso San Diego Garcia (†) and Rosario D. Garcia (†), last Dec. 19 at National Shrine of Sacred Heart at San Antonio Village, Makati. Reception was held at The Jadevine Restaurant, U.N. Ave., Ermita, Manila. The bride's gown was designed by **Ruel Rivera.**

CONTRERAS-CORDERO

Jeb Contreras, son of **Lucia Robles vda. de Contreras,** and **Elsie Cordero,** daughter of **Josephine Alim vda. de Cordero,** will exchange their marital vows today at the San Sebastian Cathedral, Lipa City. The bride's gown is designed by **Dennis Macarandang,** hair and makeup by Georgia.

Reception follows at Club Victorina, Base View Homes, Lipa City.



MAGO SILVER WEDDING

Rudy and **Zaida Mago** together with their two sons, **Steeve** and **Darwin,** will celebrate the 25th wedding anniversary of their marriage. The thanksgiving Mass and renewal of vows will be held today, 3:30 p.m., at Our Lady Queen of Peace Chapel, Pacific Village, Alabang, Muntinlupa. Dinner reception will follow at the Grand Ballroom of The Bellevue Hotel Filinvest Corporate City in Alabang. The silver bride will wear an **Eddie Baddeo** creation in grayish metallic and lilac. Draping bodice gown is made of silk gazar and Spanish lace material. Image stylists **Patrick Rosas** and **Eric Maningat** will do the bride and her entourage's hair and makeup. Concept and direction by **Raymond Villanueva** and bouquet from All About Flowers.

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7:00 pm - Dinner Fashion Show by Designers
Boyet & Rolan Dysangco
La Couture De Dasma by Elsie Alicdan
Ole' Morabe
Ramon B. Santiago

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P 25	25	33	8	2 days
P 50	50	70	20	7 days

To convert you should have at least P25 regular load and follow this:

- Via SMS, Text CAL <space> **33** or **70** and send to 223
- Via The Mall, visit The Mall, Mall Assistant> My Account> Prepaid> Buy Convert-a-Load> CAL **33** or **70**

SO GET THAT THUMB MOVING AND CONVERT YOUR LOAD, NOW!

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NOTE:

- Only regular loads via Regular Call Cards and Xpressload are eligible for Sun Convert-a-Load.
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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

JOB Market

SUNDAY, JANUARY 8, 2006
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3 SECTIONS

JOB *Market* is exclusively for job advertisements.
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Understanding through TOUCH

As a member of our inbound customer care team, you will be trained in the art of understanding people's needs.

With over 66,000 employees world-wide, Convergys knows how to keep its business growing. As more people find the need for cable and radio services, international mail, online information, and financial management, our customer care team is on call 24/7.

We are looking for individuals with a passion for learning and drive for success.

INBOUND CUSTOMER CARE REPRESENTATIVES

- Proficient in basic computer operations
- Flexible and willing to be assigned to varying work hours
- Excellent customer service skills
- Courteous and able to develop positive rapport with customers
- Dependable and has a solid work ethic
- Attentive and has a keen eye for detail
- Fluent in English and communicates clearly
- Creative and solves problems effectively
- Background in credit card verification is preferred but not required
- Completed at least 2 years of college or its equivalent

Visit our Commonwealth, Makati, Ortigas, or Alabang Site and experience 1 day processing! Our centers are open from 9:00am to 6:00pm, Mondays to Fridays.

We offer an attractive compensation and benefits package and additional incentives are given to performing agents! Applicants with resume, NBI Clearance, and SSS number will be prioritized.

HUMAN TOUCH

Convergys is a touchstone of human interaction in customer care: sensitive, responsive, involved.

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Outthinking Outdoing

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Ayala Ave., cor Salcedo
St. Legaspi Village,
Makati City
(02)857-7788

Ortigas Office
24th Floor, Robinsons
Equitable Tower, #4
ADB Avenue Ortigas
Center, Pasig City
(02)857-7688

Alabang Office
Block 44, Northgate
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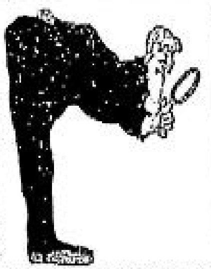
Where you find the best.



JOB Market
VISIT US AT
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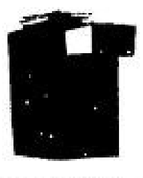
Resume Box

We gather your resumés and forward them to companies with employment needs.



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31 YEARS OF SERVICE

U-BIX Corporation, the Leading Office Systems Provider for 31 years continues to reach more clients and aggressively work towards providing high quality products and services. In preparation for our expansion in 2006, we need the following personnel:

BRANCH MANAGERS

(For Cebu, La Union, Baguio, Naga, Bacolod, Dumaguete, Bukidnon)

- College graduate 28-35 yrs. old
- At least 5 yrs. sales experience, 2 years in managerial capacity, 2 years in selling office machines and equipment.
- Excellent skills in negotiations, people and business development, relationship marketing and profitability analysis

PRODUCT MANAGERS

(for Color Copying and Printing Machines)

(Metro Manila, Cebu, Davao, Cagayan De Oro, Iloilo, Bacolod)

- College graduate 25-35 yrs. old
- At least 3 years experience in selling color printing services, specializing in color offset or lithographic printing services
- Excellent skills in negotiations, business development, relationship marketing and profitability analysis

At U-BIX, we grow our business by living our core values: delighting our customers, achieving results, rewarding performers, and working together as a team. If you think you can embrace this passion, we invite you to submit an application letter, resume with photo by post to:

Human Resources Department
U-BIX CORPORATION
Makati Branch
1344 Angono St., Makati City
E-mail Address: hrd@ubix.com.ph
Tel. Nos.: 897-6819 loc 107; 899-6439
Website: www.ubix.com.ph

We offer competitive compensation and a rewarding career to successful candidates

---

THE WORLD BANK

Requires a

TEAM ASSISTANT

The World Bank Office Manila (WBOM) has a vacancy for top caliber Team Assistant to provide efficient and high-quality secretarial and administrative support to managers. This position will be for a two-year term appointment, subject to one-year probationary period, with possibility of renewal. Duties and responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Drafts routine correspondence and proof-read documents using proper grammar, punctuation and style;
- Edits documents based on comments provided by the team members;
- Uses word processing or desktop publishing skills to produce complex text, figures, graphs, etc., according to standard Bank formats and business procedures;
- Take down minutes of the non-technical discussions/meetings;
- Coordinates and updates team and mission schedules taking priorities and changes into account, monitors changes, and inform relevant parties accordingly;
- Solves non-routine problems (e.g. responds to requests requiring file search and basic reserch through Intranetor Internet, Bank manuals);
- Assists in the preparation and logistical planning of various events, e.g., missions, conferences, workshops, etc.
- Tracks key milestones and alerts Task Team Leaders on the tasks' timelines, deliverables, budget status, etc.;
- Coordinates with relevant staff, and provides assistance and/or information on project related matters as requested;
- Maintains and regularly updates distribution lists, contact lists of project counterparts, etc;
- Ensures timely distribution of documents based on Bank procedures;
- Keeps track of paper flow and maintains up to date unit and project files (both paper and electronic);
- Participates in selected mission activities such as meetings and field work;
- Responds effectively and in a timely manner to information requests from the team, other Bank staff, external clients and partners;
- Provides back-up support to other ACS staff in other units.

Selection criteria:

- College degree in any relevant field;
- Excellent interpersonal skills, ability to establish and maintain excellent work relations in a team environment;
- High degree of initiative, flexibility and resourcefulness with a drive for efficiency and results;
- Excellent organizational skills, ability to prioritize assignment and work effectively under pressure with minimum supervision;
- Excellent written and vebal communication skills in English and Filipino;
- High level of proficiency in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Powerpoinit and Database Program);
- Thorough working knowledge of general office procedures, machines and equipment; and
- Minimum 5 years experience in secretarial and administrative work, preferably with high ranking officials.

The World Bank offers a competitive package based on the local market, and attractive medical and pension plans.

Qualified applicants are enjoined to submit comprehensive resume with recent photo and contact numbers to the address below not later than January 20, 2006. Only applicants who will be shortlisted will be called upon for interview.

PROFESSIONAL STAFFERS, (A Division of John Clements)
Level 12B, LKG Tower, 6801 Ayala Avenue, Makati City
Telephone: (+63 2) 884-1227, 884-1167
E-mail Address: noemi.ebarle@johnclements.com
visit: www.johnclements.com

Motivation through TOUCH

As a member of our outbound customer care team, you will be trained in the art of motivating people.

Convergys takes pride in its business with Fortune 500 companies. Our accounts catering to financial, telecommunication and credit cards are among the leading and on demand programs to date.

We are looking for individuals with a passion for learning and drive for success.

OUTBOUND CUSTOMER CARE REPRESENTATIVES

- Proficient in basic computer operations
- Flexible and willing to be assigned to varying work hours
- Excellent customer service skills
- Courteous and able to develop positive rapport with customers
- Dependable and has a solid work ethic
- Attentive and has a keen eye for detail
- Fluent in English and communicates clearly
- Ability to multi-task and to demonstrate problem solving skills
- Sales experience preferred but not required
- Completed at least 2 years of college or its equivalent.

Visit our Commonwealth, Makati, Ortigas, or Alabang Site and experience 1day processing! Our centers are open from 9:00am to 6:00pm, Mondays to Fridays.

We offer an attractive compensation and benefits package and additional incentives are given to performing agents! Applicants with resume, NBI Clearance, and SSS number will be prioritized.

HUMAN TOUCH

Convergys is a touchstone of human interaction in customer care: sensitive, responsive, involved.

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- Pleasant personality with attributes of drive and persistence
- Baccalaureate degree in sciences or Liberal Arts

THE REWARDS ARE BOUNDLESS

- Multinational grade compensation package
- Generous cash performance incentives
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IF YOU DARE TO TAKE ON THIS UNCOMMON OPPORTUNITY

Signify your intention with your resumé not later than
30 January 2006 to the
Finance and Administration Manager
SCHWARZ PHARMA Phils., Inc.
3/F Rufino Bldg. Ayala Ave. Cor Rufino St. Makati City
or e-mail at sppi@schwarzpharmaasia.com

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PHARMA
Health is our passion!

CAREER OPPORTUNITY

Philippines Country Director

The Marine Aquarium Council (MAC), an international not-for-profit corporation registered in the Philippines, is seeking qualified candidates for the position of **Philippines Country Director,** based in Manila, Philippines. MAC achieves marine conservation and sustainable use through international certification for the quality and sustainability of marine aquarium fishery and trade.

Preferred Qualifications:

1. Graduate degree or equivalent in business development, resource management, or a related discipline.
2. At least 10 years experience in program development and management, with exposure to coastal resource management, fisheries management and/or enterprise development an asset.
3. Experience in technical training and capacity-building, at the institutional and individual levels preferred.
4. Knowledge and experience of the tools and methods used to deliver projects to highly dispersed locations/areas.
5. High proficiency in document and workplan preparation, budgeting and financial management, with particular emphasis on conforming to procedures of a range of international donor organizations.
6. Excellent presentation, writing and interactive skills.
7. Proven ability to work in a high pressure, dynamic environment that requires skills in adaptive management and innovation.
8. Fluency in English and Tagalog (knowledge of Cebuano an asset).
9. Competency with MS Office and other document management software applications.
10. Willingness to travel frequently within the Philippines and occasionally to the USA and Indonesia.
11. NBI clearance with current validity.

Salary Remuneration : Subject to review based on qualifications and experience.
Estimated range: Php 90,000 to 120,000 per month plus benefits.

Location : Metro Manila with frequent travel within the Philippines.

Duties and Responsibilities:

Overall, the Philippines Country Director will:

1. Lead the management and oversight at of all program activities for MAC in the Philippines, which are largely focused on field site capacity building, implementation of MAC Certification with fishers and their communities and developing MAC Certified supplies of marine ornamentals.
2. Develop and coordinate the MAC network in support of certification development and implementation in the Philippines.
3. Implement testing and training for MAC Certification in the Philippines.
4. Increase awareness, recognition and acceptance by government, industry, non-government organizations and public in the Philippines of MAC Certification and the mission of MAC.
5. Identify key issues, opportunities and priorities for certification and develop and revise the workplan for developing MAC Certification in the Philippines.
6. Maintain regular communications with MAC colleagues and MAC Asia-Pacific Operations Director.
7. Manage the MAC Philippines office and MAC Philippines contractors, including reporting and accountability for MAC Philippines operating funds and supervising MAC Philippines "staff" and consultants.

For more detailed duties and responsibilities please send your request to jobs@aquariumcouncil.org

HOW TO APPLY

Please submit in confidence:

1. Covering letter with reference to the job posting;
2. Resumé detailing background and relevant experience; and
3. Names and contact information of three references to:

Director, Asia-Pacific Operations, Marine Aquarium Council
6th Floor, Salustiana D. Ty Tower, 104 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City, Metro Manila, Philippines
By E-mail : jobs@aquariumcouncil.org
By Fax : (632) 817-9541

Deadline for receipt of applications is 27 January 2006
Marine Aquarium Council is an equal opportunities employer

CAD OPERATOR
- Not more than 40 years old
ACCOUNTING CLERK
Female • Computer Literate
At least 1 year experience.
Apply at 437-D A. Juan St., San Juan or call 7251114

WANTED
Salesman for Household Items
with experience
25-35 years old
College graduate
Tel. No. : 8006071

For jobseekers, log on to: **www.jobmarketonline.com**

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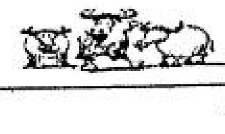
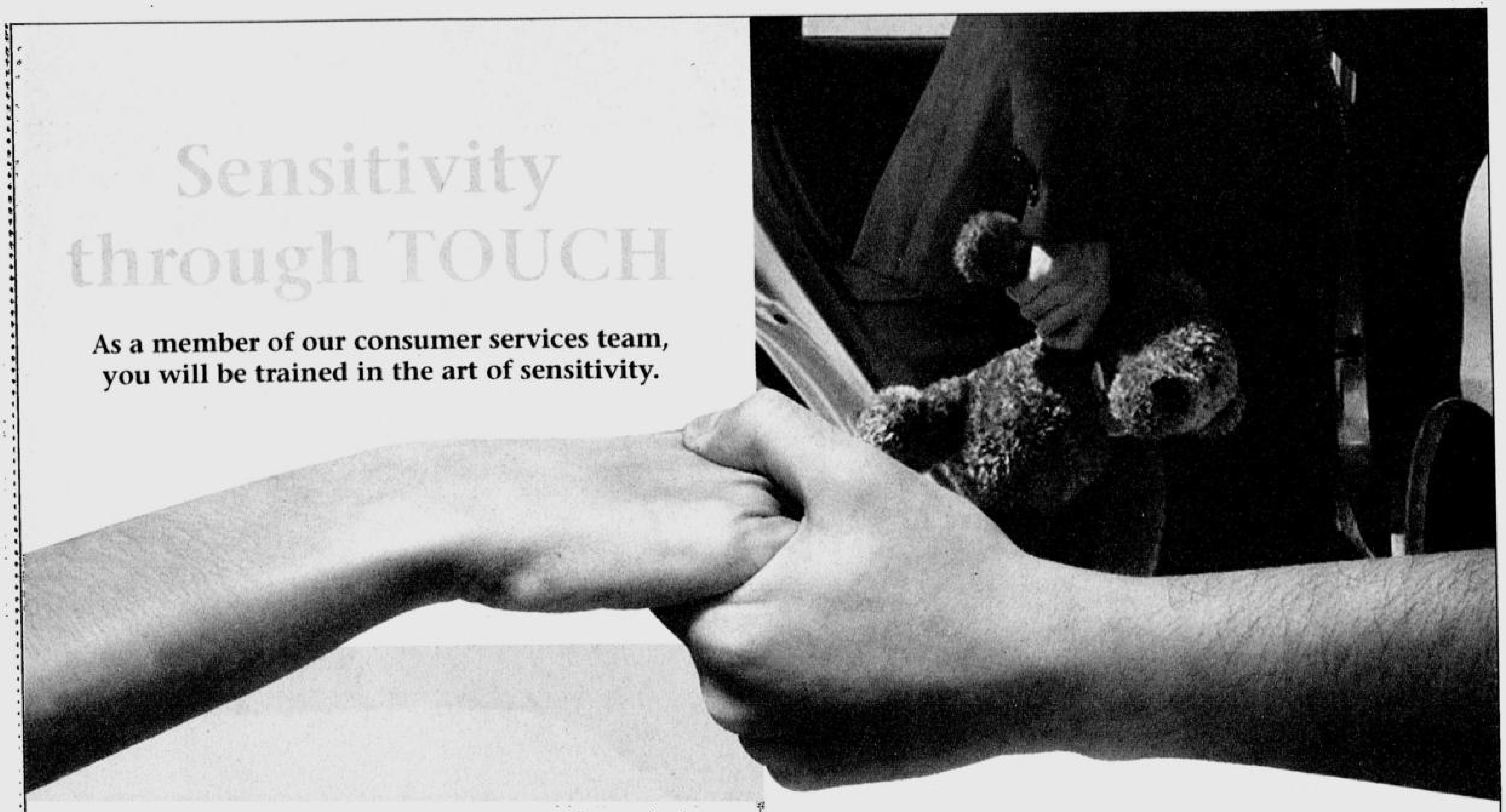


JOB Market
www.jobmarketonline.com

Sensitivity through TOUCH

As a member of our consumer services team, you will be trained in the art of sensitivity.



Being the global leader in customer care, Convergys continues to touch lives anywhere in the world. Consumer assistance may be present from monetary transactions to on-the-road vehicle support.

We are looking for individuals with a passion for learning and drive for success.

CUSTOMER CARE REPRESENTATIVES

- Proficient in basic computer operations
- Flexible and willing to be assigned to varying work hours
- Courteous and able to develop positive rapport with customers
- Dependable and has a solid work ethic
- Attentive and has a keen eye for detail
- Creative and solves problems effectively
- Excellent English written communication skills
- Assertive and sales oriented
- Conversant with financial processes
- Completed at least 2 years of college or its equivalent

Visit our Commonwealth, Makati, or Alabang Site and experience 1 day processing! Our centers are open from 9:00am to 6:00pm, Mondays to Fridays.

We offer an attractive compensation and benefits package and additional incentives are given to performing agents! Applicants with resume, NBI Clearance, and SSS number will be prioritized.

HUMAN TOUCH

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Ayala Ave., cor Salcedo
St. Legaspi Village,
Makati City
(02)857-7788

Alabang Office
Block 44, Northgate
Cyberzone,
Muntinlupa City
(02)758-1688

COST ACCOUNTING OFFICER

Job Code: CAO

He/she will be tasked to maintain, monitor and analyze, the standard, actual, and budgeted costs of the firms' various projects with varying scope and complexity. He/she will also play a key role in the budgeting process, coordinating with various strategic business and operating units in coming up with flexible budgets.

- Certified Public Accountant (CPA)
- College graduate of Accountancy
- Must have at least six (6) years experience in Cost Accounting preferably in a project-based service firm.
- Proficient in MS Office
- Excellent written and oral communication skills
- Highly analytical and process-oriented

PROCESS OFFICER

Job Code: QPO

He/she shall be responsible for ensuring the effectivity and efficiency of the quality management system, and for identifying and implementing continuous improvement. He/she shall be responsible for developing and maintaining procedures manuals, flowcharts, and other process documentations necessary for the integrated quality management system.

- Graduate of Industrial Engineering, Management Engineering or related courses. Advanced degrees advantageous.
- 5 years work experience in business process engineering or related work environments, preferably in a service-related industry.
- Solid experience in industry standards such as ISO 9001, ISO 27001, etc., preferably with previous involvement in successfully obtaining certification. Experience as an internal auditor preferred.
- Proficiency in MS Office, MS Visio
- Excellent written and oral communication skills. Experience in conducting trainings and seminars will be advantageous.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Job Code: ADM

She shall be responsible for receiving incoming calls and documents, coordination of messengerial services, general office maintenance and office supplies inventory. She shall also be tasked preparation of purchase orders, coordination with vendors and suppliers and other general administrative duties.

- Graduate of any business course
- 3 years experience in administrative functions
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office
- Pleasing personality with good oral communication skills

SENIOR ARCHITECT

Job Code: SEA

He/she shall be responsible for over-all conceptualization and design development of various project types. He/she shall ensure design quality control during conceptual design up to documentation.

- College degree in architecture
- Professional registration required
- At least 7 years experience in various project types
- Proficiency in AutoCAD 2004/2005 required
- International exposure an advantage
- Willing to travel
- Excellent written and oral communication skills required

CADD DESIGNER

Job Code: CAD

He/she shall be primarily responsible for generating working drawings.

- College degree in architecture
- At least 3 years experience in construction documentation for architecture (preferably high-rise) or interior design projects preferred
- Proficiency in AutoCAD 2004/2005 required
- Proficiency in modeling and graphic/rendering software an advantage

IT SUPPORT + DEVELOPER

Job Code: ITD

He/she shall be tasked with development, maintenance and support of internal information systems, including various database and intranet-based applications. He/she shall also provide IT support when necessary. He/she shall also be involved in various projects of the company related to quality systems and information security.

- Graduate of BS Computer Science from a reputable institution
- 3 years work experience
- Willing to work late shifts
- Strong background in one or more of the following: PHP, HTML, .NET, Java, Visual Basic
- Experience in developing database applications using MS SQL Server, MySQL, and MS Access
- Samples of work will be appreciated

Environments Global

ASST. PROJECT MANAGER/ PROJECT MANAGER

Job Code: PRM

He/she will organize and lead the project team in the delivery of project management services from pre-design to post-construction stage. He/she will be responsible in overseeing construction projects on site and head office support services. He/she must possess the ability to identify and resolve changes and conflicts in design and construction. He/she must know how to establish and maintain good working relationships with clients, consultants, contractors, and property managers.

- 5-8 years experience in project and construction management
- Proficiency in written and oral communication

PROJECT OFFICER/ENGINEER

Job Code: PRE

He/she shall be responsible for construction supervision/inspection. He/she shall undertake project management and shall ensure design quality control during project implementation.

- College degree in Electrical Engineering and /or Mechanical Engineering
- Professional registration preferred
- With 3 years experience
- Exposure in construction & fit-out preferred
- International exposure an advantage
- Computer literacy and proficiency preferred

PROJECT COORDINATOR

Job Code: PRC

He/she shall be responsible for over-all coordination with Client, Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing/Fire Protection and Structural (MEPS) engineering consultants from conceptual to contract stages. He/she shall be in-charge of design review, quality control and timely submission of project deliverables of MEPS consultants.

- College degree in architecture preferred
- Professional registration required
- At least 7 years experience in high-rise design and construction documentation required
- Design-related computer literacy and proficiency required
- Willing to travel
- Excellent written and oral communication skills required

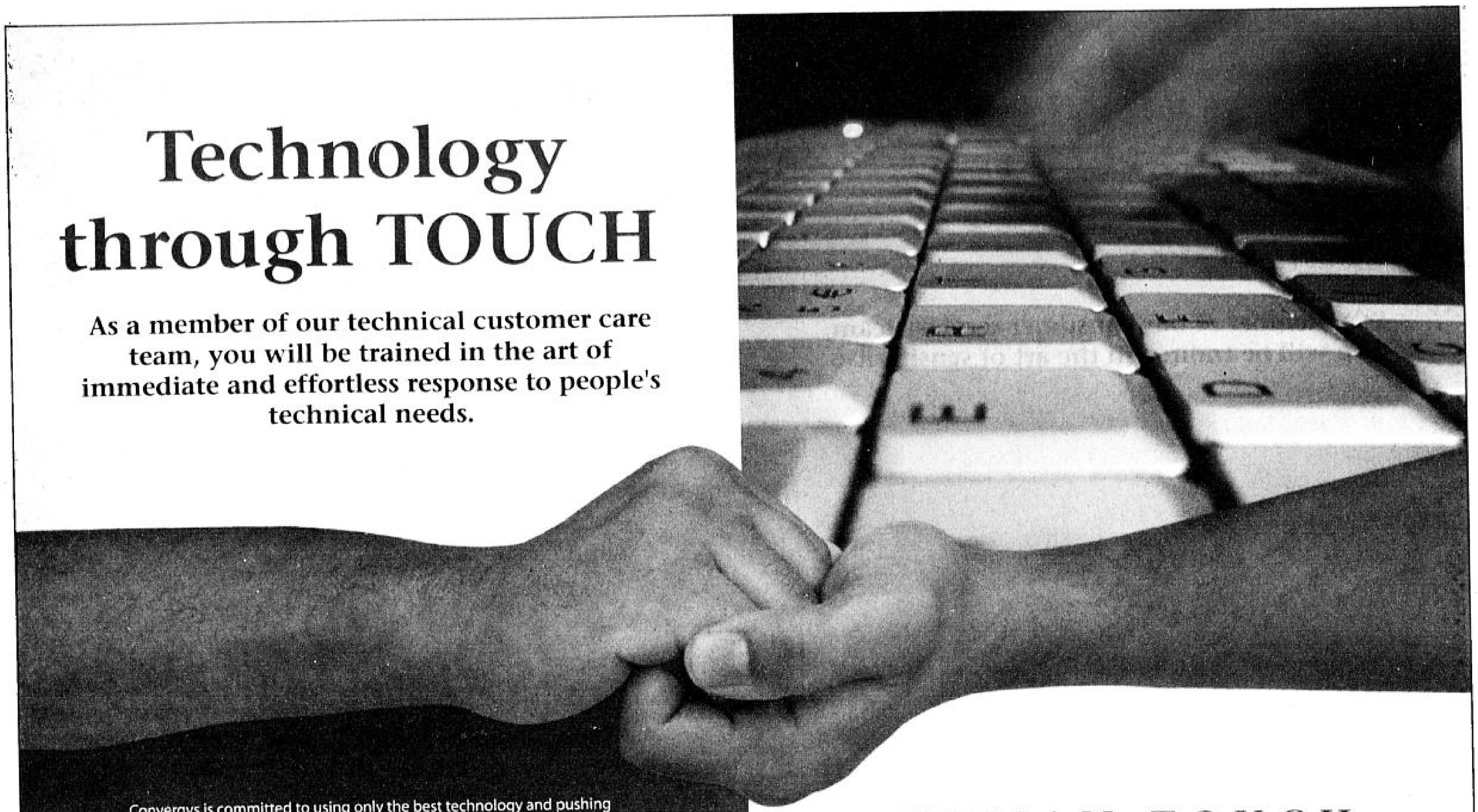
E-mail your resumé to **jobs@envglobal.net** or send it to:

27F Philamlife Tower
8767 Paseo de Roxas Ave. Makati City 1226
Voice: +63.2.8850808   Fax: +63.2.7280808

PREVIOUS APPLICANTS NEED NOT APPLY

Technology through TOUCH

As a member of our technical customer care team, you will be trained in the art of immediate and effortless response to people's technical needs.



Convergys is committed to using only the best technology and pushing the boundaries of possibilities. As the world transforms into a highway for information, computers, and Internet, its no doubt that people and technology are working hand in hand.

We are looking for individuals with a passion for learning and drive for success.

TECHNICAL CUSTOMER CARE REPRESENTATIVES

- Proficient in basic computer operations
- Technically inclined and possesses knowledge on internet troubleshooting
- Flexible and willing to be assigned to varying work hours
- Excellent customer service skills
- Courteous and able to develop positive rapport with customers
- Dependable and has a solid work ethic
- Attentive and has a keen eye for detail
- Fluent in English and communicates clearly
- Ability to multi task and to demonstrate problem solving skills.
- Completed at least 2 years of college or its equivalent

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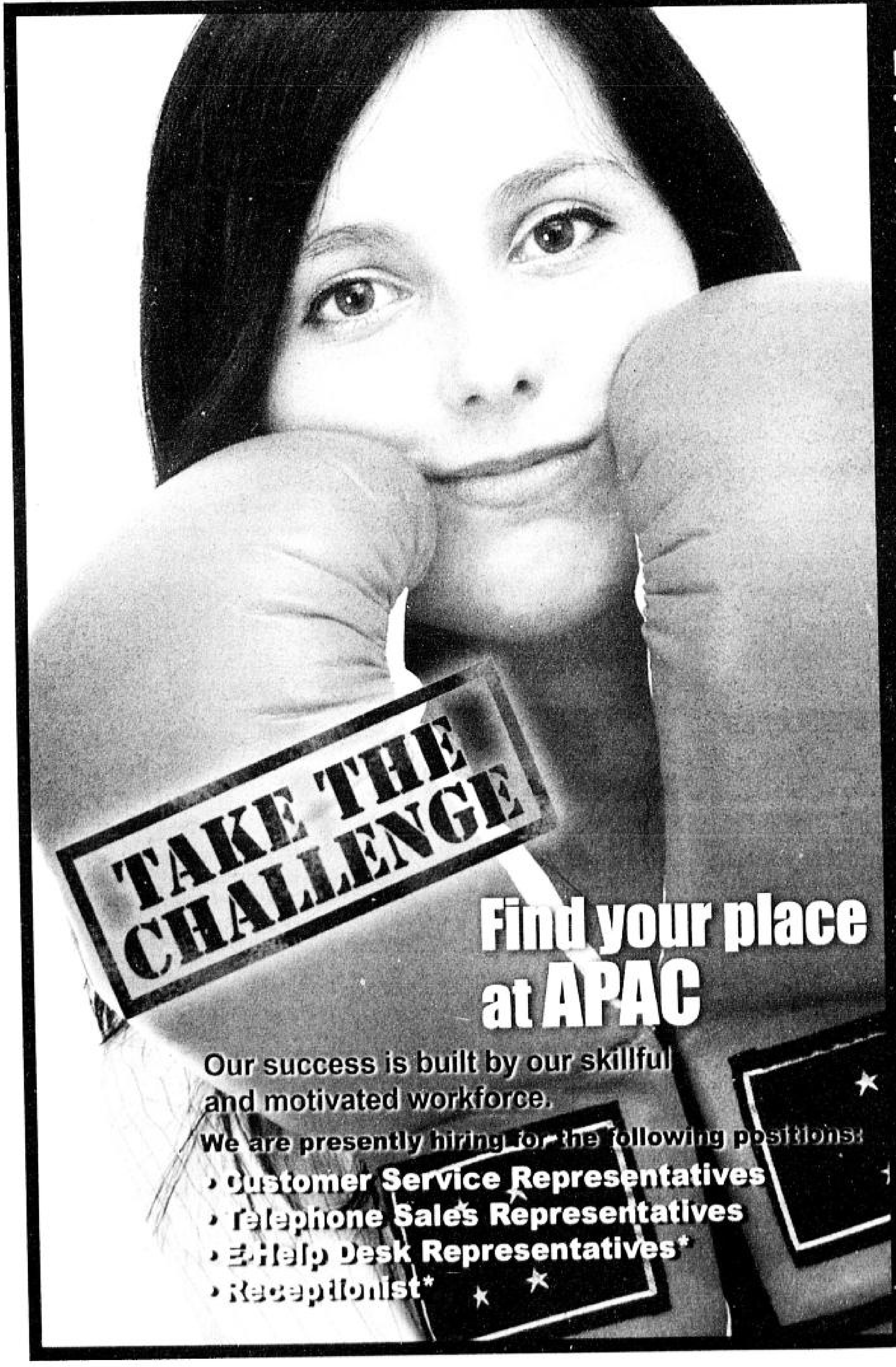
Ortigas Office
24th Floor, Robinsons Equitable Tower, #4 ADB Avenue Ortigas Center, Pasig City
(02)857-7688



Find your place at APAC

Our success is built by our skillful and motivated workforce.

We are presently hiring for the following positions:

- **Customer Service Representatives**
- **Telephone Sales Representatives**
- **E-Help Desk Representatives***
- **Receptionist***

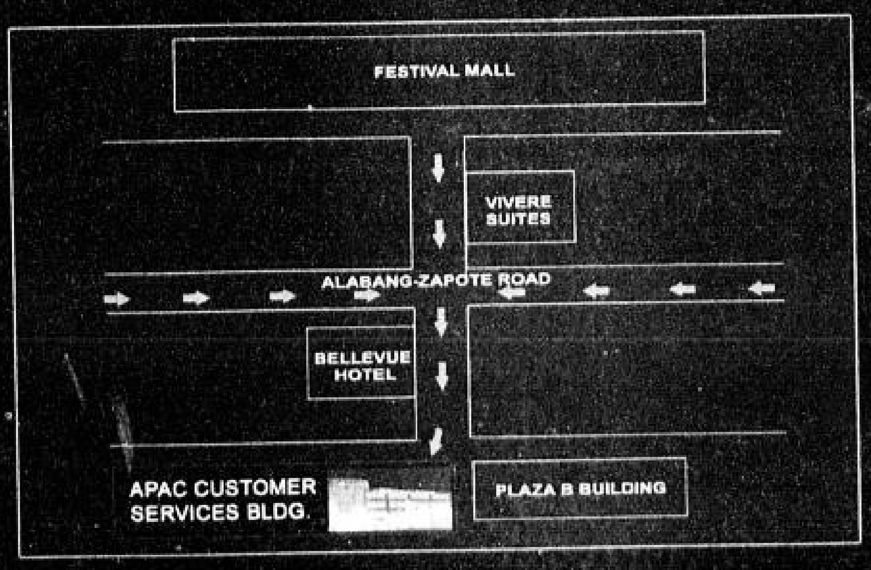
Requirements:

- Finished at least sophomore year in college
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Proficient in MS Office
- Good typing skills
- Customer service and/or sales experience an advantage

*Requires a Bachelor's Degree

Enjoy the following benefits:

- Highly competitive starting salaries
- Meal and transportation allowances
- Health and life insurance
- Paid commission and/or bonuses where applicable
- Travel and training opportunities abroad
- Aggressive internal promotion
- The latest tools, cutting edge protocols and the newest development environments



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Or call us at: 7576500 or 7576566

Apply online: **recruitment@apacmall.com**
Or visit our website: **www.apaccustomerservices.com**

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

JOB *Market*

SUNDAY, JANUARY 8, 2006
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3 SECTIONS

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Text us your feedback: Inquirer jm name/city/message. Send to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

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[illegible] than just good pay.

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Job security and career advancement • Continuous training and skills development
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We offer a premium for contact center experience or Spanish proficiency!

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- Strong customer service/sales skills
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- Computer and internet proficiency
- Willing to work shifts

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Ayala corner Sen Gil Puyat Avenues, Makati City
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Course Developer

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Business Development Manager
Sales Associate

HUMAN RESOURCES
Recruitment Director
Internal Communications Manager
Employee Relations Officer
Recruitment Officers (Manila, Cebu and Davao)
Recruitment Associate (Davao)
Recruitment Assistants (Manila, Cebu and Davao)

SERVICE DELIVERY
Program Director
Director, Quality Managment
Forcedesk Manager
Workforce Manager
Operations Manager, Financial Services
Team Supervisor, Financial Services

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
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Telecommunications Manager
CMS Administrator
Telecommunications Engineer
Telecommunications Administrator
Dialer Administrator
Helpdesk Analyst
Database Analyst
Reporting Analyst
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- Sharp and quick thinking
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You may apply via e-mail to **servicecenterjobs@hsbc.com.ph** or personally visit any one of our two sites (Alabang or Makati). We welcome you to our **Open House**, Monday to Saturday,9:00 am to 3:00 pm, at our Alabang and Makati site for **one-day processing**. **Get a job offer the same day.**

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- Chinese Readers and Cantonese Speakers
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Makati site:
39th Floor PBCom Tower.
6795 Ayala Avenue corner V. A. Rufino Street
Makati City 1226

Walk-in applicants must bring a copy of their resume, one 2x2 picture and photocopies of their last two payslips.
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DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
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Pueblo de Oro Development Corporation is a highly progressive housing and property development company currently developing a 360-hectare prime property in Cagayan de Oro City into a comprehensive township project. It is now inviting dynamic and topnotch individuals for the position of:

PROPERTY PRODUCT MANAGER

(Cagayan de Oro based)

He will participate in product conceptualization, project budgeting and sales and marketing planning. He will be responsible for product monitoring and delivery, attainment of sales targets, project development on a timely basis and supervision and profit responsibility for his assigned product lines in general. Both sales and project staff will report to him. Thus, this is a position of great responsibility covering various aspects of several property projects.

The ideal candidate we are looking for must have the following:

- A relevant undergraduate degree, preferably with MBA;
- With a minimum of 3-5 years experience in planning, building and marketing property projects, such as house and lot units;
- With above average skills in sales, marketing, planning, leading, controlling and people management;
- Ability to initiate programs and achieve results in a dynamic manner;
- Good personality and communication skills;
- Knowledge of various computer software and applications.

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to immediately send their resumé, transcript of record and recent ID photo or apply in person at:

Pueblo de Oro Development Corporation
PODC Building, Masterson Avenue, Pueblo Business Park, Cagayan de Oro City, 9000 or e-mail to jlaizpuru@pueblodeoro.com.ph

or

Makati Office: 15th Floor, PSBank Center
777 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City
or e-mail to mgp@iccpgroup.com.ph

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Male / Female. College graduate preferably with a Degree in Psychology, Behavioral Science or Human Resource Management. Computer Literate. Must possess good communication skills. Related work experience a plus.

CUSTOMER RELATIONS STAFF

Male / Female. Graduate of Mass Communications or any four year business course. Very good in oral and written communication skills. Customer-oriented and proficient in computer applications.

CREDIT & COLLECTION STAFF

Male / Female. Graduate of any four year business course. With at least 1 year related work experience. Good communication skills, flexible and hardworking. Proficient in computer applications.

ACCOUNTING STAFF

Male / Female. Accounting Graduate. Must be computer literate. Patient and Hardworking. Work experience an advantage.

LTO STAFF

Male. College graduate of any business course. Familiar with LTO transactions and strong PC literacy. Willing to do field work.

SERVICE MARKETING STAFF

Male / Female. Graduate of any four-year business course. Must possess excellent oral and written communication skills. Persistent and hardworking.

SERVICE ADVISOR

Male / Female. Graduate of Mechanical Engineering or equivalent. Prior working xperience in a car dealership will be an advantage. Good communication skills. Customer and service-oriented.

PARTS COUNTER SALESMAN

Male. Marketing or any business course graduate. Preferably two (2) years stint in car dealership. Good oral communication skills.

DISPATCHER/DRIVER

Male. Holder of a valid professional driver's license. Preferably a technical or vocational graduate with knowledge in auto mechanics and basic troubleshooting. Physically fit and emotionally stable.

CAR JOCKEY / CHECKLISTER

Male. Must be a graduate of at least 2 years' automotive vocational course. Must be honest and trustworthy. Should be a holder of a valid professional driver's license.

SERVICE TECHNICIAN

Preferably a graduate of at least 2 years' Automotive Technology / Engineering course. Knowledgeable in performing periodic and preventive maintenance works. Should be a holder of a valid driver's license.

PLEASE APPLY DIRECTLY WITH THE HRDD OF THE FOLLOWING DEALERSHIPS:
(Submit your resumé with a 2x2 colored picture.)

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Fax No. 7126945

HONDA CARS MARIKINA
A. Bonifacio Avenue, Barangka, Marikina City
Email Address: fabir@hondamarikina.com.ph
Tel. No. 9981794 Fax No. 9981794

HONDA CARS MANILA
1877 Paz Guazon St., Paco, Manila
Email Address: hrd@hondamanila.com.ph
Tel..No. 5624548 Local 130/105
Fax No. 5624548 Local 102

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Commonwealth Ave., Fairview, Quezon City
Email Address: hrd@hondafairview.com.ph
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- Digital Imaging Company (Voice Support)
  - HR back office support (Speaks German or French)

Qualifications:

- Graduate of any Bachelor's degree
- Must possess excellent oral and written English communication skills
- Call center experience is an advantage
- Proficient in the use of computers and various applications
- Willing to work in a fast-paced, dynamic and schedule-shifting environment

Support & Leadership Posts

- Operations Manager
- Team Leaders
- Workforce Managers
- Workforce Specialists
- Quality Assurance Specialists
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- Treasury Accountant
- Data Network Specialists
- System Administrators
- Implementation Manager
- IT Helpdesk
- Technical Support Engineers
- Deputy Manager - Sourcing

Call center experience is a must for support and leadership posts.

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IBM Daksh/Tesda Job Fairs

- Cultural Center
  B. Morada St., Lipa City Batangas
  January 11, 2006, from 10AM to 6PM
- 2/F City Commercial Center
  Sta. Rosa, Laguna
  January 12, 2006, from 10AM to 6PM
- 8/F City Hall, Session Hall,
  San Pablo Laguna
  January 13, 2006, from 10AM to 6PM

IBM Daksh Recruitment Center

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  Edsa cor. Shaw Boulevard
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THIRD SECTION OF JOBMARKET PEOPLE AT WORK ON PAGES 16 & 17

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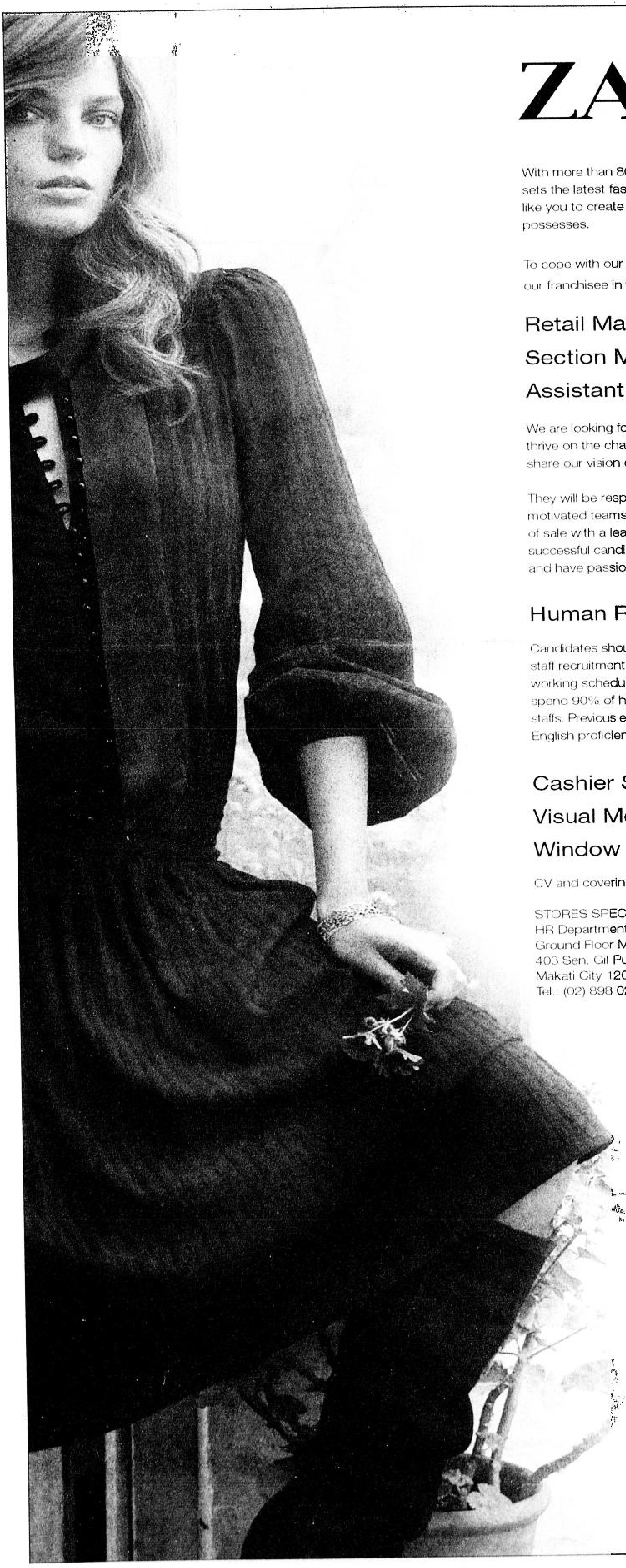

ZARA

With more than 800 stores in the most commercial streets in 58 countries, Zara sets the latest fashion trends for millions of people. We count on professionals like you to create and transmit the excitement that this extraordinary company possesses.

To cope with our major expansion, we are now recruiting for the new stores of our franchisee in the Philippines:

Retail Manager
Section Manager
Assistant Section Manager

We are looking for highly committed young professionals who adore fashion and thrive on the challenge of working in a high-energy business, who are willing to share our vision of creating a new concept in customer service.

They will be responsible for organising and managing stores and leading highly motivated teams. This requires a proven management experience at the point of sale with a leadership style that inspires motivation and enthusiasm. Our successful candidates will have excellent communications skills, fluent in English and have passion for customer service and products.

Human Resources Manager

Candidates should be between 26-35 years old and they will be responsible for staff recruitments, training & personal development, planning & controlling staffs working schedules. They will have to be hands-on person, will be required to spend 90% of his/her time in the stores and be in close contact with all the staffs. Previous experience in HR and knowledge of labor law will be big advantage. English proficiency is required.

Cashier Supervisor
Visual Merchandiser
Window Dresser

CV and covering letter should be sent, within 2 weeks from today, to:

STORES SPECIALISTS, INC.
HR Department
Ground Floor Midland Buendia Building
403 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue
Makati City 1200 Philippines
Tel.: (02) 898 02 46. Fax: (02) 895 07 42

Also, we are now recruiting for the new stores of our franchisee in the Philippines:

Sales Assistants
Cashiers

We are looking for candidates who have excellent communication skills, a positive attitude and love customer service.

CV and covering letter should be sent, within 2 weeks from today, to:

STORES SPECIALISTS, INC.
Personnel Department
Ground Floor Midland Buendia Building
403 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue
Makati City 1200 Philippines
Tel.: (02) 898 02 46. Fax: (02) 895 07 42

www.zara.com

We are in need of a dynamic individual who will be qualified for the position of:

TECHNICAL MANAGER FOR ANIMAL NUTRITION

The Technical Manager position is part of the sales and marketing team that provides technical support in terms of product specifications, product applications, feed formulation, trouble shooting and handling of technical issues or concerns. Will be actively participating in product launches, seminars, workshops to ensure successful introduction of defined products to target customers.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Preferably graduate of Bachelor of Agriculture with specialization in Animal Nutrition;
- MBA / Masteral units in Animal Nutrition is an advantage;
- Has at least 2 years experience in animal feed formulation;
- Has pleasing personality with above average communication skills(both written and oral);
- With driving skills;
- Willing to be assigned in areas outside Metro Manila

NOTE FOR CANDIDATES:

Please address your application letter and resumé to Ms. Janine Atienza. You may contact her at 0916-4919044 for details.

FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

HR SPECIALIST / SUPERVISOR

- Graduate of Psychology, HRM or related fields
- Ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines
- Effective sourcing and interview skills
- Work independently and willing to take initiatives
- Minimum of three (3) years experience
- Computer literate and familiar with Labor Laws

DOCUMENT CONTROLLER

- Ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines
- Work independently and willing to take initiatives
- Computer literate and with pleasing personality
- Minimum of two (2) years experience and familiar with ISO 9001: 2000 Std
- Successful candidate shall be under the office of the President

PROJECT ENGRS. (HVAC/FP) / QTY SURVEYORS

- At least three years experience
- Work independently and willing to take initiatives
- Amenable to working long hours
- BS Mechanical Engineering Graduate

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PIPE FITTERS

Submit resumé to:
ENERTHRUST INCORPORATED
GF PERLACOMSE BLDG.,
26 Stanford St., Cubao, Quezon City

WE WILL ONLY RESPOND TO QUALIFIED APPLICANTS

COLOURWIDE CO. INC.

A newly formed company is in need of a

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

Qualifications:

- Candidate must possess a Professional License in Civil Engineering
- Performs structural engineering planning and design
- Knowledge of local codes pertaining to structural engineering especially billboards.
- At least 3 to 5 years working experience
- Provides technical review and advice tactfully and effectively
- Provides sustained attention to complex plans and specifications
- Inspect and evaluate the quality of construction of structural elements

Interested applicants must submit their comprehensive resumé with recent 2 x 2 picture @ Unit 1901 Prestige Tower, Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City

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Visit the Recruiting Open House on Jan. 9-13 (Mon-Fri), 9am-6pm!

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Bagong Pag-asa
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kkp@wwf.org.ph
www.wwf.org.ph

WWF, one of the world's leading independent conservation organisations, with a global network active in 100 countries is seeking to recruit a:

Climate Change and Energy Campaign Officer

The Climate Change and Energy Campaign Officer will work for WWF Philippines based in Quezon City. The position will be primarily responsible for developing strategy and managing the campaign for the Climate and Energy Programme, which includes building constituency, networking, lobbying, organizing public action and events, and preparing campaign materials. The position will be required to work closely with other members of the WWF Philippines conservation divisions/units and WWF's International Climate Change Team.

The main responsibilities will include:

- Plan and implement the campaign of the Climate and Energy Policy Programme
- Implement the awareness-raising component of the Climate and Energy programme
- Assist in building constituency to support climate and energy work
- Create and maintain network in media
- Work on international projects with other WWF offices in the region
- Serve as resource person for project and education activities
- Develop communication tools, materials and messages
- Develop campaign materials
- Attend and Participate in WWF Climate and Energy Policy regional and international meetings, and conferences

The requirements are:

- Filipino nationality with excellent written and spoken English
- Undergraduate degree in either communications, natural sciences, economics or political science
- At least 3 years campaign experience
- Proven ability to work under own initiative, be resourceful and work as a team
- Good understanding of how climate and energy policy links with campaign and communications work
- Excellent interpersonal, networking and presentational skills
- Enthusiasm for the subject and conservation as a whole
- Demonstrated commitment to environmental protection and a clear view on the role of environmental groups in society

Interested candidates may apply with three references and salary expected on or before Jan. 13, 2006. Please email Ma-Anne Roque at maroque@wwf.org.ph and Raf Senga at rsenga@wwf.org.ph.

WWF– World Wide Fund For Nature (also known as World Wildlife Fund)

SHEEÑe

Thailand's no. 1 cosmetic brand is now in the Philippines!

We are in search for high caliber individuals to become

BRAND MANAGER

Who will be responsible in building the brand Sheeñe to the Philippine market. The successful candidate must be:

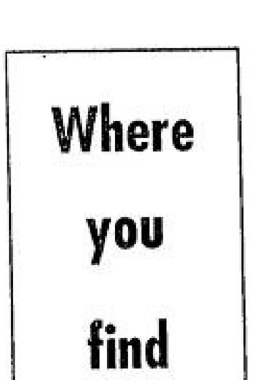
- Female at least 30 years old with pleasing personality.
- Graduate of any business course, preferably with Marketing background.
- With at least five (5) years related experience gained from the cosmetics, beauty products or retail industry.
- With working knowledge on profit and loss statement.
- Aggressive, and skilled in handling people.
- Goal driven with positive work attitude.
- Mature and responsible.
- Capable of adapting to a multi-tasking work environment.

Interested parties are invited to submit their comprehensive resumé not later than January 25, 2006 to:

THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
54 J.P. Rizal cor Aguado Street
Brgy. Marilag, Project 4 Quezon City

Or send it to:
cmci@broline.com

Where you find the best.



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manilarecruitment@ncogroup.com

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(For Cavite, Laguna, Lemery, Lipa, San Pablo, Lucena, Quezon, Muntinlupa, Las Piñas, Parañaque, Makati, Pasig, Mandaluyong, and Quezon City areas)

- Graduate of any 4-year course
- Aggressive resourceful, self-motivated, customer & result oriented, and hardworking
- With good communication skills and with valid driver's license; Computer literate and willing to work on field assignments
- Should have a pleasing personality and a natural flair for power dressing; With or without experience in this field
- FRESH GRADUATES ARE WELCOME TO APPLY!!!

WE OFFER UNLIMITED INCOME OPPORTUNITIES FOR QUALIFIED APPLICANTS!!!

SERVICE MANAGER

- Graduate of Mechanical Engineering
- With extensive experience in service operations
- Possess strong leadership qualities
- Customer-oriented with excellent oral & written communication skills
- Computer literate and with valid driver's license

GROUP SALES MANAGER

- Graduate of any 4-year course and computer literate
- Has at least 3 yrs. related work experience in an automotive dealership
- Excellent interpersonal, organizational and communications skills, and with strong self motivation

AFTER-SALES FLEET MARKETING MANAGER

- Male and graduate of Marketing, Advertising or Communication Arts
- At least 5-10 years relevant marketing experience preferably in automotive dealership
- Result-oriented, strategic, creative and thrives in a fast paced environment
- Excellent interpersonal, oral and written communication skills
- Must be able to conceptualize & implement successful marketing program to build the brand & customer

BP MARKETING HEAD

- Male and graduate of any 4-year course
- With knowledge on estimating and insurance policies
- Willing to work on fieldwork

PARTS SUPERVISORS

- Graduate of any 4-year course
- With at least a year experience in supervisory position
- Must have excellent oral and written communication skills
- Must be knowledgeable about spare parts
- Must be able to negotiate with suppliers
- Computer literate and with automotive background

FLEET MARKETING STAFFS

- Male or Female & graduate of any 4-year course
- With valid driver's license and familiar around Metro Manila
- With contacts on private and government offices

JOB CONTROLLERS

- Male and a graduate of BS Mechanical Engineering
- With at least one year experience in service mechanical operations
- Knowledgeable in troubleshooting and diagnosis of vehicles and with valid driver's license

WARRANTY PROCESSORS

- Graduate of Mechanical Engineering
- Knowledgeable in warranty procedures and claims
- Administers warranty parts identification and disposal, conducts road test evaluation, submits technical reports for warranty concerns
- Computer literate and with automotive background

INSURANCE CLAIMS COORDINATORS/ VEHICLE DAMAGE EVALUATORS

- Male and graduate of any 4-year course
- With knowledge on body paint & repair and on damages of vehicle panel
- With contacts on insurance companies
- Familiar with insurance policies and claims
- Computer literate and preferably with automotive background

QC/FOREMAN and SERVICE ADVISORS

- Graduate of Engineering course
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Customer-oriented, computer literate, and with automotive background

SHOWROOM CONSULTANTS

- Graduate of any 4-year course
- Preferably female, at least 5'5" in height
- With excellent communication skills & with valid driver's license
- With pleasing personality and previous selling experience is an advantage

We are also in need of:

CRD STAFFS, ACCOUNTING SUPERVISORS & STAFFS, SALES TRAINORS, ENGINEERING GRADUATES, AND DRIVERS

Interested applicants may apply in person from Mondays to Saturdays, 8:30 am – 4:00 pm or may mail their comprehensive resumé with recent 2x2 colored picture at:

HUMAN RESOURCES and ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

NISSAN Southwoods
Carmona Toll Plaza, South Luzon Expressway
Carmona, Cavite (near STI College)
Tel. No.: 699-2400 loc. 104 Telefax: 699-2400 loc. 106

NISSAN Westgate Alabang
Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang-Zapote Road, Alabang
Muntinlupa City (infront of Pricemart)
Tel. No.: 772-1826 loc. 122/123 Telefax: 772-1873

NISSAN Shaw Center
411 Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City
Tel. No.: 726-8921 Trunkline: 722-7576 loc. 104 Telefax: 726-6630

nissan@licagroup.net

METRO MANILA

WE ARE IN NEED OF TOP RATE INDIVIDUALS TO FILL IN OUR VACANCIES OF:

MANAGEMENT TRAINEES

(for the following Departments)

MARKETING – Females, Business course graduates
STORE OPTNS. – Males/Females, Degree graduates

- Maximum 30 years old
- Degree graduates from reputable schools
- Honest, articulate, innovative & highly-organized
- Can stand pressures and long hours that come with our dynamic organization
- Fresh graduates are welcome

STAFF

(for the following Departments)

ADMIN. – Males, graduates of Bachelor of Science in Electrical or Mechanical Engineering or of BS Architecture

HRD – Females, BS Psychology, Behavioral Science, Management or related degree graduates; exposure in Recruitment, Benefits, Payroll & Compensation or Training an advantage but not required

ITS – Males/Females, graduates of Bachelor of Science in Computer Science/Engineering or any 4 or 5 year IT course

- Maximum 26 years old
- Must be of above average intelligence and communication skills
- Honest, smart & hardworking
- Fresh graduates are welcome

For processing of applications please e-mail resumé to
svihrdrec@smsupermarket.com
or apply personally from Mondays to Saturdays;
9:00 AM to 5:00 PM
at SM Supermarket SM Corporate Offices
Building E,1000 Bay Boulevard SM Central
Business Park, Bay City, Pasay City
For inquiries call (02) 831-1888 local 5458 or 5461

BATANGAS, CEBU CAVITE, ILOILO & PAMPANGA

URGENTLY NEEDS

Management Trainees for STORE OPERATIONS

Males/Females, maximum 30 years old, degree graduates. Honest, innovative and highly-organized. Can stand pressure and long hours that come with our dynamic organization. Fresh graduates are welcome.

Applicants are requested to personally apply at SM Supermarket Employees Entrance of preferred branch assignment.
For details call HRD at telephone numbers; Iloilo- (033) 320-7933
Cebu--(032) 344-5890, Batangas- (043) 722-2268 or 723-0309
Cavite- (046) 432-3273 or 432-3014, Pampanga- (045) 963-7952 to 53

FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

ACCOUNT MANAGER (SALES)

Will perform sales related work including acquisition and maintenance of clients. 21 to 27 yrs. old. College graduate. Call Lalaine at 8137616 or 8158744 for details.

A leading Telco service provider needs

Electronic Technician

- must be experienced in repair of headsets, telephone sets, microphones
- must not be more than 35 years old

Please send resumé to

Unit 101 South Gate Bldg.
1508 Finance Drive, Madrigal
Business Park, Ayala Alabang
Muntinlupa City or call:
09175269834

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15 SELECT FEW

THIS IS A ONCE-IN-A-GENERATION OPPORTUNITY!

SO, IF YOU'RE HEARTY ENOUGH FOR THE CHALLENGE, PLEASE CALL JANE OR EMMA AT **687-6138 OR 634-3828** FOR INTERVIEW SCHEDULE.

INTERVIEWS WILL BE HELD ON TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY **JANUARY 10 & 11, 2006, 2:00-4:00 P.M.** AT THE BUSINESS CENTER OF EDSA SHANGRI-LA HOTEL, MANDALUYONG CITY.

OUR INDUSTRY IS ON THE VERGE OF THE BIGGEST BOOM IN REAL ESTATE HISTORY AND OUR COMPANY IS LOOKING FOR AN ELITE GROUP OF WINNERS WHO WILL BE GIVEN:

- **An expensive** sales / leadership training for **FREE**
- **An opportunity** to rub elbows with the rich and famous and share the French sophistication of ***Versailles***, a **7.5 Billion Peso** world-class development right beside Ayala Alabang.
- **Telemarketing support** including important leads and appointments with the right Prospective Clients
- **Generous** Allowances and Commissions
- **An opportunity** to have an accelerated career growth!

THE RIGHT PLACE FOR PEOPLE IN A HURRY!

IF YOU'RE QUALIFIED, YOU'LL BE SORRY IF YOU DON'T GRAB THIS RARE OPPORTUNITY!

But you can only apply if you:

- Drive your own car or have access to one
- Have excellent communication skills
- Are confident; with high energy and pleasing personality
- Possess the quality of a good leader
- Have the brain, beauty or brawn

Note: Fresh Graduates who can speak and write very fluent English and endowed with "the X-factor" are welcome.

Also Needed: Telemarketers and Secretaries

MEGATREND REALTY NETWORK INC
Suite 2601B East Tower
Philippine Stock Exchange Center
Exchange Road,
Ortigas Center, Pasig City

Versailles
Owner/Developer:
STATE PROPERTIES CORPORATION

ThreeBond

Three Bond Singapore Pte Ltd

We are Expanding!

Manufacturer of Adhesives and Sealants, a Japanese multinational company located in Makati is looking for a dynamic individual to fill-up the position of:

ACCOUNT OFFICER

Responsible for providing customer service and marketing

JOB REQUIREMENTS:

- Graduate of any Bachelor's Degree
- Male; Age: 24 to 29 years old
- Willingness and drive to do fieldwork sales is required; previous experience is an advantage.
- Has at least 1 year sales related experience
- Must possess excellent oral and written English communication skills
- Must be proficient in the use of computers and various applications
- Must have driver's license or willing to secure
- Familiar in PEZA areas.

Opening for **Account Officer** is for immediate hiring.

1. E-mail your resumé with photo to: **owie@threebond.com.ph**
2. To learn more about ThreeBond, visit **www.threebond.co.jp**

McLarens Young International Loss Adjusters are pleased to announce the opening of its **new operation** serving the insurance market in the Philippines.

We look forward to providing a top quality professional claims service to our many international and domestic clients. If you are an experienced adjuster, engineer or surveyor looking for a new challenge why not give us a call.

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Tel. : 889 4696 / 89 4932
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Email : manila@mclarensyoung.com
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Michael Murphy ACII ACILA
President

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LAKE WASHINGTON COMMUNICATIONS, INC SEATTLE COMMUNICATION SERVICES

Lake Washington Communications, Inc. [a.k.a. Seattle Communication Services] is in need of experienced sales associates to handle U.S. based customers in the rapidly expanding industry of home improvement. Applicants must have confidence in their sales and customer service abilities. Come work for the number one Floor covering e-commerce retailer in the U.S. Take on the challenge of an:

ACCOUNT MANAGER

Goal-driven, self-motivated, professional achievers

Proven track record in Sales and Customer Service

Exceptional American style English communication skills both written and spoken

Internet and PC savvy

Rise above the rest! Join our Sales Team now and enjoy a competitive compensation package plus opportunity to earn commissions.

Email: **recruitment@seacom.ph**
Phone: **632.898.3848**
Website: **seacom.ph**

Address: 312B 3/F LRI Business Plaza
210 Nicanor Garcia Street
Bel-Air II, Makati City 1203

We also have other career opportunities waiting for you!

TRAINER

- Excellent public speaking, presentation and interpersonal skills are required; must have good stage presence.
- Proven training experience in "classroom" type settings is required.
- Exceptional project management skills. Attention to detail is required.
- Must have exceptional time management skills, ability to schedule and manage multiple courses.
- Advanced computer knowledge to include all basic operation systems, with ability to learn new systems.

CLAIMS ANALYST

- At least 2 year(s) working experience in the field of Customer Service or equivalent
- Excellent communication skill is essential for this position, together with the ability to influence decisions
- Strong problem solving and analytical skills for interpreting

DATA INTEGRITY SPECIALISTS

- Works well with numbers and must have a keen eye for detail
- Knowledge in database administration is a plus
- Internet savvy; familiarity with eBay online marketplace is an advantage
- Must have good written and oral communication skills

WEB DESIGNERS/FLASH ANIMATORS

- Highly innovative and has the vision and energy to keep the company in the cutting edge of website and ad design
- Experience in multimedia development & internet projects, preferably with HTML development experience
- Good understanding of web technologies (Flash Animation)
- Ability to work in a "virtual team", meet deadlines and can work with minimum supervision

QUALITY ASSURANCE SPECIALISTS

- With at least 3 years of work experience in the same field or equivalent.
- Must have experience in providing coaching/feedback to both employees and managers as QA Specialist.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills.
- Must have strong interpersonal skills and with the ability to provide constructive feedback in a manner that results in improved performance.
- Must be objective professional and matured

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE SPECIALISTS

- Graduate of Finance/Accountancy/Banking or equivalent
- With at least 1 year of related experience in Accounts Payable data entry
- Should be highly proficient in the use of MS Excel
- Must have a keen eye for detail and strong organizational skills

WORKFORCE ANALYSTS

- Highly assertive, self-directed individual
- Excellent time management and people skills
- Must be highly proficient in the use of MS Excel
- Knowledge of Avaya System is a plus
- Work experience in a Call Center environment is an advantage

NETWORK ADMINISTRATORS

- Well-versed in monitoring a Linux platform with Windows unit behind it
- Competent in managing, monitoring and maintaining configurations of installed software, hardware and networking equipment
- Experienced in system and security monitoring
- Experienced in evaluating, procuring, installing, and troubleshooting hardware, software, and networking equipment
- With background in VOIP
- Background in writing Perl scripting is an advantage

HUMAN RESOURCE GENERALIST

- Must have at least 2 years of work experience in the field of Human Resources with focus on Recruitment and Payroll & Benefits administration.
- Must be familiar with all government/statutory transactions e.g. SSS, Philhealth, BIR and HDMF.
- Can work with minimal supervision.

MARKET RESEARCH ANALYST

- Must be highly internet savvy; must have good understanding of internet language e.g. URL, masterlist keywords, etc.
- Must have strong background in doing research and demonstrated persistence in task completion
- Has the ability to follow through with assigned tasks under minimal or no supervision

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Punongbayan & Araullo

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In line with our expansion, we are inviting top-caliber professionals to join our team as...

Corporate Finance Associates

As an important member of our Corporate Finance Advisory team, you will study each client to understand its business as if you were part of its organization. Specific engagements may include IPO or M&A advisory, private equity research, project feasibility studies and market validations studies, share valuations, project promotions, financial restructuring and recovery. Our Corporate Finance Division assists clients in highly sensitive investment banking transactions – from structuring to distribution and brokering.

Responsibilities:

- Assist in preparing and analyzing financial models and worksheets for the review/ compilation of financial projections
- Perform sensitivity analyses and valuation studies
- Assist in research work, either private equity type research or market validation studies
- Provide critical feedback to the lead consultant or investment banker heading the advisory team
- Prepare draft reports as input for feasibility and market/industry studies, valuation reports, review reports, information memoranda and other deliverables

Requirements:

- College degree in a business-related course (preferably a CPA or a CFA Level 1)
- Two years experience in audit/accounting, management consulting, economics, finance and other related fields
- Willingness to work long hours; ability to accomplish tasks with minimum supervision
- Confidence in dealing with senior management
- Strong command of English; well-developed interpersonal skills

To successful applicants, we offer a highly competitive compensation package, opportunities for growth, the exposure gained in working directly with clients from various industries undertaking either M&A-related work or fund raising, and the rewards of working with some of the best people in the profession who have solid investment banking and consulting experience.

We invite you to bring, fax, e-mail, or mail your resumé and 2x2 photograph to:

Fred Damian
Partner, HR & Communication
Punongbayan & Araullo
19th Floor, Tower 1, The Enterprise Center
Ayala Avenue, Makati City
Tel: (02) 886-5511 loc. 728
Fax: (02) 886-5511 loc. 722
E-mail: Fred.V.Damian@pna.ph

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SALES ENGINEERS

- Instrumentation/Eng'g. Graduate
- Not more than 30 years old, with 1 year experience

Apply: **Unimate International Inc.**
414 Cityland Shaw Tower, Shaw Blvd.
Mandaluyong City (T-635-9014)

ACCOUNTANT

- Graduate of B.S. Accountancy, male/female, 22-28 yrs old,
- Can handle bookkeeping, government reports,
- Bank reconciliation, financial statements preparation.

Personally apply at:

Unit 1016, Cityland Shaw Tower,
Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City
(beside Shangrila Mall)
Tel. No. 687-4130

JOB OPENINGS

PA Government Services Inc. (PA), prime contractor of the Philippines Energy and Clean Air Project (ECAP), announces the opening of two (2) vacant positions, **Clean Air Activity Manager (CAAM) and Clean Air Communications Coordinator(CACC).** The positions are located in the ECAP's Manila office.

ECAP is a United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) multi-year initiative scheduled to operate through September 2008, whose Clean Air component is aimed principally of improving air quality through vehicle emissions reduction in Metro Manila, Baguio, Cebu, and Davao.

The **CAAM** will report directly to the project's Chief of Party (COP) and Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP) and shall receive technical advisory support from the Clean Air Technical Advisor. The **CACC** shall report directly to the project's Communications Specialist.

Clean Air Activity Manager

ESSENTIAL TASKS

Specific duties associated with this task include:

- Technical research and analysis on clean air/transport issues & concerns
- Preparing project work plans and activity designs;
- Supervising project implementation work at the project's target cities, and of consultants, service providers, and subcontractors;
- Relationship building and networking with project partners;
- Technical secretariat in meetings with government and civil society partners; and
- Project monitoring, evaluation, and reporting.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

The individual must possess the following:

- Graduate units in Environmental Sciences or related discipline; graduate degree is a plus
- Minimum of three (3) years working experience in the area of urban environmental management, preferably air quality concerns
- Above average project management skills
- Fluency in verbal and written English
- Proficiency with Windows XP and MS Office (Excel, Word, Powerpoint and Outlook)

Clean Air Communications Coordinator

ESSENTIAL TASKS

- Coordinate and oversee various communication-related projects
- Prepare project work plans and activity designs
- Act as secretariat in meetings with government and civil society partners
- Establish and keep contacts with Project stakeholders
- Assist in the conceptualization of various activities and projects with designated subcontractors
- Monitor news articles, studies, and other vital info that may be beneficial to the objectives of the ECAP
- Assist in writing press releases, correspondences, presentation materials and other communication materials/literature for ECAP

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

The individual must possess the following:

- A Bachelor's degree in Communications Arts, Developmental Studies or similar disciplines and a minimum of four (4) years experience in handling Communications and Development-related projects and fields
- Proficiency with Windows XP and MS Office (Excel, Word, Powerpoint and Outlook); desktop publishing skills is a plus
- Verbal and written fluency in English
- Media-savvy as a plus

For both positions, you must also be an excellent team player, have very good interpersonal skills, and possess the ability to work effectively under highly demanding situations. Remuneration is negotiable and will be commensurate to qualifications.

If you have the interest, qualification, and fortitude to meet the challenges of the positions, please submit your application letter and detailed curriculum vitae in MS Word format to r_delacruz@ecap.com.ph or call 914-1106 for further details. Deadline for submission is January 16, 2006.

IMMEDIATE HIRING! NEW JOB OPPORTUNITIES

An established Engineering Management and Technical Services Company in Asia Pacific Region with PETRONAS license for the Oil & Gas onshore/offshore fabrication is looking for qualified and highly experienced personnel to join our team.

PROJECT MANAGERS (PMT)

Minimum 15 years experience in the Oil & Gas or Petrochemical industry with at least 8 years experience in project management as a Project Manager or Senior Team member in offshore construction/conversions.

PMT LEAD/SR ENGINEERS (MECHANICAL/PIPING/STRUCTURAL/ ELECTRICAL/INSTRUMENTATION)

Minimum 15 years' experience in the Oil & Gas or Petrochemical industry with at least 5 years experience in Project Management as Lead Mechanical Engineer.

PMT FIELD ENGINEERS (MECHANICAL/PIPING/STRUCTURAL/ ELECTRICAL/INSTRUMENTATION)

Minimum 6 years' working experience in related engineering discipline in the oil & gas or petrochemical industry.

PMT LEAD/SR PLANNING ENGINEERS

Minimum 10 years' experience in the oil & gas or petrochemical industry with at least 5 years experience in Planning & Project Control as Lead Planning Engineer.
Possess good knowledge in Artemis or Primavera.

PMT PLANNING ENGINEERS

Minimum 5 years' experience in the oil & gas or petrochemical industry.
Possess good knowledge in Artemis or Primavera Project Management Software.

LEAD/SR DESIGN ENGINEERS (PROCESS/MECHANICAL/METALLURGY/ STRUCTURAL/ELECTRICAL/ INSTRUMENTATION)

Minimum 12 years' experience in the oil & gas (Offshore platform) or petrochemical industry with at least 5 years experience as Lead Design Engineer with consultancy and conceptual or detail design experience.

DESIGN ENGINEERS/DESIGNERS (PROCESS/MECHANICAL/METALLURGY/ STRUCTURAL/ELECTRICAL/ INSTRUMENTATION)

Minimum 5 years' experience involving in Conceptual or detail Design works in the Oil & Gas (Offshore platform) or Petrochemical industry.

PDMS/BOCAD DESIGNERS/OPERATORS/ ADMINISTRATORS

Minimum 5 years' experience in the oil & gas production facilities, petrochemical plant or related field.
Possess good knowedge of applicable AutoCAD, BOCAD & PDMS computer software

LEAD/SR COMMISSIONING ENGINEERS (MECHANICAL/PIPING/ELECTRICAL/ INSTRUMENTATION)

Minimum 12 years' experience in the Oil & Gas fabrication (offshore platform) or Petrochemical industry with at least 5 years experience as Lead Commissioning Engineer

COMMISSIONING ENGINEERS (MECHANICAL/PIPING/ELECTRICAL/ INSTRUMENTATION)

Minimum 5 years' experience involving commissioning works in the Oil & Gas construction (FPSO/FSO).

LEAD/SR QA/QC ENGINEERS (MECH./PIPING/STRUCTURAL/WELDING/ ELECTRICAL/INSTRUMENTATION/ PAINTING)

Minimum 10 years' experience in the oil & gas or petrochemical industry with at least 5 years experience as QA/QC Engineer or inspector in similar industry.

QA/QC ENGINEERS/INSPECTORS (MECHANICAL/PIPING/STRUCTURAL/ WELDING/ELECTRICAL/ELECTRICAL/ INSTRUMENTATION/PAINTING)

Minimum 8 years' experience in QA/QC works in the Oil & Gas or Petrochemical industry.

REMUNERATION: ATTRACTIVE SALARY & GOOD PACKAGE OFFERED

Shorlisted candidates will be interviewed on January 2006.
Please send your resumé immediately as follows.
Email address : lhbtech@yahoo.com
cjt_engr@yahoo.com
jtlh_engr@yahoo.com

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*The **ICCP Group** is a conglomeration of companies involved in investment banking, venture capital, property development and services. It is now inviting dynamic and topnotch individuals for the position of:*

SPECIAL ASSISTANT to the CHAIRMAN

The successful candidate shall report directly to the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the ICCP Group. He will undertake the study of selected business development opportunities, manage or carry out a variety of special projects/ assignments, assist in the analysis and review of reports submitted to the Chairman and monitor the performance of individual companies of the Group. This is a senior managerial position in which the incumbent will work closely with the Chairman.

The ideal candidate should have:

- an MBA or other post graduate studies;
- at least 3 years experience in at least some similar activities, with significant exposure in undertaking project feasibility studies and analyzing financial reports;
- good analytical, interpersonal and presentation skills;
- well rounded personality;
- excellent communication skills; and
- proficiency in computer software languages.

Interested and qualified candidates are invited to immediately send their resumé and recent photograph to:

The Human Resources Department
ICCP GROUP OF COMPANIES
15th Floor, PSBank Center
777 Paseo de Roxas, 1226 Makati City
or e-mail to mgp@iccpgroup.com.ph

OUTBOUND CALL AGENTS

Candidates should have...

- ✓ Assertive Selling Skills
- ✓ Excellent English Communication Skills
- ✓ Strong Customer Service Orientation
- ✓ At least 1 YEAR of Outbound Calling Experience in a US campaign

and should be...

- ✓ Honest, Reliable, Dedicated and Hardworking
- ✓ College Graduate
- ✓ Male/Female (at least 25 years old)

ONLY THOSE WITH THE ABOVE QUALIFICATIONS WILL BE ENTERTAINED.

Bring your updated resume and drop by our office anytime between 6AM to 12NN Monday to Wednesday (Jan 9 to 11).

A salary of more than PHP 15K which include the 25% night differential, attendance & guaranteed performance incentives plus training await the chosen few.

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You may also email your resumes at anytime to nrcmanila@yahoo.com

NRC

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Level Up! the country's premier online gaming company is looking for proactive team players who are committed to online gamers just as we are. If you got the following qualifications, head over to the Level Up! Office or email your resumes to jobs@levelupgames.ph.

LOGISTICS OFFICER

- University Graduate preferably with Accounting background but not required
- At least 3-5 years in Warehouse/Logistics management in a supervisory capacity
- Computer Literate
- High integrity and maturity level, with strength of character and the ability thrive in a fast-paced environment
- Very organized, results oriented and with a deep sense of urgency
- Has the ability to manage multi tasks and deliverables simultaneously

KOREAN CONTENT SPECIALIST

- Can provide English translation of all Korean content and scripts
- Filipino citizens or hold relevant residence status
- IT Background is an advantage
- Full time or Part time positions available

Interested applicants may visit our office at the 11th /F Pacific Star Bldg. Makati Ave. cor Sen Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City.
Bring a copy of your resume with latest 2x2 picture and an application letter written in English (For Korean Applicants)
Email: jobs@levelupgames.ph

WANTED IMMEDIATELY
ACCOUNTING STAFF / BOOKKEEPER

- Female, preferably single
- Preferably newly graduate – major in Accounting
- With or without experience
- Computer literate
- With pleasing personality
- Can work w/ less supervision
- Can work under pressure / overtime

Apply in person at **VETERANS PHILIPPINE SCOUTS SECURITY AGENCY**, located at # 81-E. Alfina Bldg., Lantana St., Cubao, Quezon City and look for Ms. Monette P. Catbagan or call 722-9234 local 19

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MEDICAL STUDENT / NURSE / PHYSICIAN

Are you ambitious, highly qualified, female, aged 19-30 yrs old, Single, of good character, willing to pursue a fully sponsored Medical Scholarship? Willing to take Psychological and Medical Evaluations with Polygraph test?

If this is you pls call 0917-9421263

Looking for

PROGRAMMERS/ SOFTWARE DEVELOPERS

With the following qualifications:

- Must be an experienced Power Builder System Developer
- Must have an experience in converting 2-tier applications to 3-tier architecture is an advantage
- Experience in developing web enabled and mobile applications (Pocket Builder) is an advantage
- Must have a current passport, immediately available and be willing to work abroad for two years
- Innovative and hardworking

Interested applicants may send their resumé to: mips_it@yahoo.com or fax no.: +63 2 8122297

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We are in need of

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SUPERVISORS

to work for our Distributor Partner in the areas of Pampanga, Bataan, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija and Zambales.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

- ✓ **Will handle a sub-distributor partner to grow the business.**

QUALIFICATIONS:

- ☞ College graduates from the localities;
- ☞ Highly motivated; Aggressive; Hardworking;
- ☞ Must possess excellent oral and written communication skills both in English and Filipino;
- ☞ Preferably Male, willing to work on a graveyard shift, fast-paced, dynamic and flexible environment.

☐ Background in sales is not necessary, but a plus..

Send your ***Resume*** to **GQY Distribution Group Inc.** at
GQY Distributors Inc., Dolores Homesite Extension, Dolores, San Fernando Pampanga

or call/fax 045-9614048 and look for
Mr. Mar Manabat or Mr. Jess Yap.
You can email it to
jessy@mail.irnet.net.ph or qdydistribution.com.ph

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PLANT YOUR SEEDS WELL.

Be part of our handpicked pioneering team and make your mark in the BPO/ Call Center Industry

CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE OUTBOUND

- Bachelor's Degree graduate in any field
- At least six (6) months sales/telemarketing experience
- Excellent entrepreneurial skills and thrives in a quota-driven working environment
- Experience in lead generation, B2C campaigns and maintaining US-based clients a plus
- Full-time and part-time positions available

CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE TECHNICAL

- Proficient in spoken Mandarin/ Fookien/ Cantonese preferred
- Bachelor's Degree graduate, preferably in Computer Science, Computer Engineering and other related courses
- At least six (6) months working experience as a Technical Support Agent
- Basic technical troubleshooting know-how
- Strong diagnostic and problem solving skills

TRAINING SUPERVISOR

- Bachelor's Degree in Behavioral Science, Psychology or any other related disciplines
- Post-graduate degree/units a plus
- At least three (3) years experience in English Language and Accent Training, Sales Training and Product-specific Training Programs
- Expert know-how in adult learning theories and demonstrated ability in all phases of program development life cycle
- Excellent English communication skills both oral and written
- Strong people and critical thinking skills
- Highly creative, dynamic and results-oriented
- Open to graveyard and shifting schedules

CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE INBOUND

- Proficient in spoken Korean preferred
- Bachelor's Degree graduate in any field
- Strong empathizing and problem solving skills
- Highly trainable fresh graduates are encouraged to apply
- Experience in a call center/BPO environment an advantage

All **CSR positions** require excellent **English communication skills** with a **neutral accent**, strong **customer orientation**, well-developed **critical thinking skills**, **computer and internet** proficiency. Interested candidates should be **assertive**, a **self-starter**, **dynamic**, **results-driven**, **energetic** and are open to working in **graveyard** and **shifting schedules**.

FACILITIES OFFICER

- Bachelor's Degree graduate preferably in Engineering, Property/Facilities Management, Finance or any equivalent discipline
- At least 3 years of property and/or facilities management experience, preferably from a Call Center/BPO or manufacturing firm
- Trustworthy; can handle and safeguard confidential information
- Highly analytical and superior project management skills
- Know-how on securing government permits and other related requirements
- A certain degree of creativity and latitude is required
- Above average oral and written communication skills
- Willing to work on weekends, holidays and odd hours

RECEPTIONIST

- Bachelor's Degree graduate in any field
- Excellent customer service, English communication and multi-tasking skills
- Experience in providing general administrative support including front desk management
- With high sense of urgency and presence of mind
- Computer literate, personable and professional
- Willing to work in graveyard and shifting schedules
- Fresh graduates with good scholastic records are encouraged to apply

FINANCE ASSISTANT

- Bachelor's Degree in Accountancy or Finance
- CPA preferred but not required
- At least one (1) solid year background in General Accounting including AR/AP, bookkeeping, etc
- Financial analysis and budgetary skills covering all facets of FS preparation
- Familiarity with sundry government and taxation requirements
- Very good people and communication skills
- Highly analytical, detail-oriented, results-driven, fast learner, and a team player
- Exposure in using Accounting-based software a plus

OTHER OPEN POSITIONS
- Shift Manager
- Workforce Supervisor
- OD Supervisor
- QA Supervisor
- Team Leader

You can visit us at 14/F Robinson Cybergate Center Pioneer St. Mandaluyong City
Testing Schedules: 9:30am and 1:30pm, Mondays-Fridays
P: 63.2.667.3838

Send your updated resume with recent picture at the following email addresses:
winsource001@gmail.com (for CSR posts)
mycareer@winsourcesolutions.com (for Support and other posts)
*State Position Applied in the Subject Heading

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We are the exclusive affiliate of a worldwide training and consulting organization providing results-oriented training and consulting services to Fortune 500 companies and top Philippine organizations. We have an immediate opening for:

Account Executives

Who
- *Can engage in new business development by conducting market and account research, generating leads, and participating in account management to leverage opportunities;*
- *Can initiate client contact through mailings, prospect calls, and customer visits;*
- *Can be a differentiating feature of doing business with existing clients and prospects.*

The candidates we seek should have:
- *Excellent verbal and communication skills*
- *At least 1 year experience in sales and/or business development*
- *A bachelor's degree in business, education, psychology, marketing or related areas*

To the successful applicants, we offer:
- *A competitive compensation package;*
- *Plus a sales incentive and bonus plan; and,*
- *Extensive training opportunities to develop personal management, leadership and professional selling skills.*

Please e-mail your resumé and recent 2x2 photo to:

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Manila Exacon Group, Inc.
Unit 714 Tower 1, Globe Telecom Plaza, Madison cor Pioneer Streets, Mandaluyong City

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We are looking for potential dealers in the Visayas and Mindanao region for SICK Products.

We will provide a comprehensive After Sales Support on all SICK products including warranty, training and product launches.

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ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center
Pasig City
Email: sick_ph@pacific.net.ph

FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

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SELF-MOTIVATED AND CAN WORK WITH MINIMUM SUPERVISION
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HEAVY EQUIPMENT MECHANIC (1)

MALE, 30 TO 38 YEARS OLD
AT LEAST FIVE(5) YEARS EXPERIENCE AS HEAVY EQUIPMENT MECHANIC
MUST BE WELL VERSED IN HYDRAULIC COMPONENTS: TRANSMISSION, TORQUE CONVERTER, STEERING DRIVE AND HYDRAULIC SYSTEM
PREFERABLY WORKED IN HEAVY EQUIPMENT DISTRIBUTORSHIP COMPANY
WITH VALID DRIVER'S LICENSE

INTERESTED APPLICANTS MAY APPLY PERSONALLY DURING OFFICE HOURS OR SEND THEIR COMPREHENSIVE RESUMÉ WITH CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBER AND 2"x2" ID PICTURE TO:

P.O. BOX NO. : **P.O. BOX 1195 QUEZON CITY**
E-MAIL TO : **info@ihec.com.ph**

International Heavy Equipment Corporation
155 Panay Avenue, Quezon City
929-3547 to 49 * fax 929-3545
eMail: ihecmla@netasia.net

AN EXPANDING MULTI-AWARDED SCHOOL AS CENTER OF EXCELLENCE ALONG MARCOS HI-WAY, ANTIPOLO CITY IS LOOKING FOR DYNAMIC, INNOVATIVE AND OUTPUT-ORIENTED PERSONNEL FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR 2006-2007

TEACHERS

(Pre-school, Grade School and High School)
- **Graduate of Early Childhood Education; BSEED / BSE major in Math, Science, Social Science, English, Filipino, Home Economics, Physical Education, Music, Arts & Computer**

All applicants should be good in oral/written Engl single male or female below 30 years of age

The school offers competitive compensation and fringe benefits to accepted applicants.

Tel. Nos. 249-0917 / 249-0919

WANTED LAWYER

with 1 year experience
in handling collection cases
Compensation Package:
Basic Salary + free practice
Employment shall commence
in January 2006
Submit resumé at Suite 1103,
Prestige Tower, Emerald Ave.
Ortigas Center, Pasig City
or call **6341074** – look for ***Ms. Cris***

INTERIOR DESIGNER & ARCHITECT

(Opportunity to work in China)
- University graduate or higher (must be relevant to Interior Design or Architecture)
- Min. 3 to 5 years of practical experience
- Handle full set of working drawings
- Good English and communication skills
- Good freehand sketching skills & knowledge in AUTO CAD
- Excellent design concept and must be a creative person
- Ability to work independently, take responsibility, work hard and able to work under pressure
- Opportunity to work in China

FASHION DESIGNER (Opportunity to work in China)

- University graduate or higher (must be relevant to Fashion Design)
- Min. 3 to 5 years of practical experience
- Good freehand sketching skill & computer knowledge
- Good English and communication skills
- Experience in sports wear is essential
- Ability to work independently, take responsibility, work hard and able to work under pressure
- Opportunity to work in China

Interested candidates kindly send full resumé (Microsoft Word Format only) and expected salary to email-address: konmoko@netvigator.com

HYUNDAI
Makati

Hyundai Makati Automotive, Inc., one of the leading authorized dealers of Hyundai passenger cars, is in need of highly skilled individuals to fill in the following vacancies for its 2006 expansion:

Sales Consultants

- not more than 26 years old
- business course graduate
- with above average communication skills
- customer service driven, analytical & people-oriented
- willing to do field work
- preferably with driver's license

Receptionist / Telephone Operator

- not more than 24 years old
- with good communication skills
- people oriented
- computer literate

Service Advisors

- male, 24 – 28 years old
- graduate of BS Mechanical Engineering or any related course
- with professional driver's license
- analytical & people-oriented
- above average oral & written communication skills
- at least one (1) year experience in the same capacity

Job Controller

- male, 24 – 28 years old
- trade school graduate of automotive or equivalent course
- with professional driver's license
- with at least three (3) years experience in the same capacity
- with leadership skills

Automotive Technicians

- male, 21 – 28 years old
- with professional driver's license
- trade school graduate of automotive or equivalent course
- with or without experience

Interested applicants may send their resume (indicating the position applied for) with 2x2 picture and transcript of records not later than **January 20, 2006** to:

Human Resources Department
HYUNDAI MAKATI AUTOMOTIVE, INC.
Mezzanine Floor, Hyundai Center
2307 Don Chino Roces Ext., Makati City
Email address: lanie@hyundaimakati.com

ICRC

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) seeks for immediate employment:

The ICRC Mission

The ICRC is an impartial, neutral and independent organization whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of war and internal violence and to provide them with assistance. It also endeavours to prevent suffering by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and universal humanitarian principles. Established in 1863, the ICRC is at the origin of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The ICRC opened its delegation in the Philippines in 1982.

Medical Field Officer

The Medical Field Officer (MFO), under the supervision of the Medical Delegate, will participate in medical programmes in the Philippines related to assistance to victims covered by ICRC's mandate and mission.

Profile and required experience

- Health/nursing background with additional public health degree.
- Practical experience in the medical field, and in working with the administration of health and medical structures of the Philippines.
- Good command of English and Tagalog (written and spoken). Other Filipino languages an asset.
- Good interpersonal skills and ability to develop a network of contacts.
- Previous work with an international humanitarian organization an asset.
- Good computer skills (Windows package).
- Flexibility and open-minded personality.
- Good working spirit and ability to work in an international and multi-disciplinary team.
- Ability to travel extensively within the country.
- Valid driver's license and driving experience.

Communication Field Officer

The Communication Field Officer (CFO) will organize and participate in field dissemination work intended to reinforce and facilitate protection and assistance activities in favour of victims covered by ICRC's mandate and mission. He/she will also assist with the production of various communication tools and publications.

Profile and required experience

- Teaching, communication, journalism or social-work/development background. University degree preferred.
- Good command of English, Tagalog and Cebuano (Visayan), written and spoken. Other Filipino languages an asset.
- Good interpersonal and public speaking skills and ability to develop a network of contacts.
- Previous experience working within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and/or other international humanitarian organisations as asset.
- Good computer skills (Windows package, incl. power point).
- Experience with production of Information-Education-Communication materials.
- Flexibility and open-minded personality.
- Good working spirit and ability to work in an international and multi-disciplinary team.
- Ability to travel extensively within the country
- Valid driver's license and driving experience.

Logistics/ Administrative Assistant

The Logistician/Administrative Assistant provides technical and operational support, under supervision of the administrator, in the areas of purchasing, warehousing, stock management, maintenance / fleet management in order that assistance arrives at the final distribution point at the agreed time and in good condition. Arranges and executes customs clearance and transit on forwarding of relief items. He/she will also assist the administrator in issues related to premises, such as maintenance and repair of office equipment, furniture and or premises and other administrative tasks.

Profile and required experience

- University degree or business administration, logistics education.
- At least 4 years work experience in logistics (International company preferable).
- 25 to 35 years old
- Fluent in written and spoken English.
- Good computer skills (Windows package).
- Committed and rigorous
- Flexibility and open-minded personality.
- Hard working person.
- Good working spirit and ability to work in an international and multi-disciplinary team,
- Valid driver's license and driving experience.

Legal Officer

The Legal Officer will follow-up and analyze the national implementation of international humanitarian law (IHL), organizes seminars and tables, provides expertise and information on the Philippine Penal Code. He/she will also handle the administrative work of the unity

Profile and required experience

- Law Degree (LL.B) with a strong focus on international law.
- Law Master (LL.M) in international law is an added advantage, as well as some knowledge of international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law.
- A minimum of 5 years of working experience, preferably in an international organisation related to humanitarian law, human rights or refugee law.
- Interest in international humanitarian law.
- Good relational skills to develop a network of contacts with governmental and non-governmental institutions.
- Flexibility and open-minded personality
- Ability to travel extensively within the country.
- Good computer skills (Windows package, incl. power point).
- Fluent in spoken and written English and Tagalog.
- Good working spirit and ability to work in an international and multi-disciplinary team.
- Valid driver's license and driving experience.

Qualified applicants are requested to submit their comprehensive resumé, recent NBI clearance and explain in their covering letter their motivation and interest in the position as well as salary expectation to the address below ***not later than 25 January 2006.***

The Administrator
International Committee of the Red Cross
5th Flr. Erechem Building, Corner Rufino & Salcedo Streets
Legaspi Village, Makati City
Or by e-mail to: icrcman_recruit@yahoo.com.ph
Only short listed candidates will be notified.

WWF for a living planet®

care

WWF and CARE are launching a new global programme to promote payments for watershed environmental services that can contribute towards poverty alleviation and environmental protection. WWF and CARE are searching for qualified candidates for a

NATIONAL COORDINATOR

The work involves developing business cases to implement payments schemes that would benefit poor upland communities. The applicants must have economics, social sciences or environment background; 5 years experience in environmental management with 2 years as project manager; basic knowledge of payments for environmental services; strong diplomacy and excellent english writing skills.

E-mail mmanalo@wwf.org.ph for more details of job description and application process. Submit resume by January 17, 2005 to: The HR unit c/o Manna Manalo, WWF Philippines, 4th Floor, JBD Plaza, # 65 Mindanao Avenue, Bagong Pag-asa, Quezon City. Tel. 9207923 / 7931 / 7926.

LOOKING FOR AN EXCITING CAREER IN THE OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY?

Schlumberger, a leading oilfield service company is now hiring for the following positions:

- Electronic Instrument Technician with maintenance experience on Advanced Electronic devices and systems which involve complex Mechanical, Electrical, Electronic, Electromagnetic, Hydraulic, Radiation and Ultrasonic sensors.
- Mechanic Maintenance Technician with maintenance experience on Automotive engines, Air-Conditioning, pneumatic systems, compressors and be able to troubleshoot basic Electronic/Electrical Control systems.
- Hydraulic Maintenance Technician with maintenance experience on Advanced Mechanical equipment involving hydraulic systems.

- We offer:
  - Competitive Salaries and Excellent Benefits
  - Career advancement through a Learning Management System

- Qualified candidates must satisfy the following:
  - Diploma / Certificate / Degree holder in Electronic or Mechanical Engineering
  - Minimum experience of 2 years and strong troubleshooting skills
  - Pass a medical exam/background check
  - Willing to work in any Middle East country (Qatar, UAE, Yemen, Oman)
  - Good communication in English (verbal and written)
  - Able to work long hours and flexible work schedule
  - Possess good knowledge of computer system/hardware/software

For applicants who fit the above requirements, please send your CV with picture by email to rewgimsdm@slb.com. Only e-mail applications will be reviewed. Tests/interviews for qualified candidates will be conducted on the 13th to 16th of-Jan-2006 in Manila.

Republic of the Philippines
Office of The President
Mindanao Economic Development Council (MEDCo)

URGENT HIRING

The Mindanao Economic Development Council (MEDCo) is presently implementing a two-year program entitled "Strengthening the Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-The Philippines – East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA) Support Team on Customs, Immigration, Quarantine and Security (BEST on CIQS)".

BEST on CIQS is a technical assistance from the Australian Agency for International Development (AUSAID) whose purpose is to enhance the capacity of the CIQS-Unit within the MEDCo Secretariat and the various CIQS agencies in Southern Philippines to provide CIQS services in Philippine ports participating in BIMP-EAGA activities. The primary goal of the project is to contribute to the improvement of security and stability within the growth area.

To ensure effective project implementation, four (4) additional staffs will be hired to augment the existing CIQS Unit at the MEDCo Secretariat. Thus, the following positions are urgently needed:

Position/s : **(3) Senior Economic Development Specialist**
Qualifications.
Education: Bachelor's degree relevant to the job
Age: At least 25 years old
Experience: 2 years of relevant experience, preferably with background or knowledge on international security cooperation
Training: 8 hours of relevant training

Position : **(1) Driver II**
Qualifications:
Education: Elementary School Graduate
Experience: With at least 2 years experience
Training: None required

Applications must be sent to the address given below not later than 11 January 2006.

Chairman, Mindanao Economic Development Council
Mindanao Economic Development Council (MEDCo) Secretariat
4th Floor, SSS Building, J.P. Laurel Avenue, Davao City, Philippines
Tel. No. (6382) 221-1345; Fax No 221-7060; E-mail: info@medco.gov.ph

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We are a Japanese multinational IT company engaged in systems development and information consultancy. We are in urgent need of dynamic, result-oriented individuals to fill-up the positions of:

Programmer Analysts

- Bachelor's degree in computer science, mathematics or any IT related field preferred
- More than 2 years of java software development experience preferably in the financial service industry
- Experience in IBM Websphere platform is preferred
- With experience in developing web services applications under JAVA
- Strong familiarity with open source frameworks like Struts, Hibernate and Spring
- Good knowledge of relational database design and programming using any of the following: DB2, SQL Server and Postgres,

*** Newly graduates with JAVA knowledge are welcome to apply.

Senior Systems Analyst

- Bachelor's degree in computer science, mathematics or any IT related field preferred
- Project Leader or Senior Systems Analyst level from previous employer
- Experience in C/C++ (should be high, at least 7 years)
- Experience in sockets and other communications protocol
- Strong familiarity with POSIX standards and writing portable Unix codes
- Experience in Credit Cards or Banking systems (familiarity with the business process).

Attractive compensation package and a chance to travel abroad await successful applicants

Interested applicants are requested to hand-carry their resumé at:

Infocafee Systems Inc.
10F Ramon Magsaysay Center
1680 Roxas Boulevard, Malate, Manila

A leading restaurant in Boracay is currently in search of :

COOK

- Male
- 28 to 45 years old
- With at least 3 years experience in cooking, preferably in an Italian restaurant or similar establishment
- Willing to work hard
- Willing to be relocated in Boracay

Successful candidates can look forward to a challenging career and a competitive salary package.

Qualified applicants are requested to send resume with 2x2 picture by mail, or e-mail to:

MR. ERICO LOPEZ
HR & Admin Services Department
Star City, Sotto St., CCP Complex, Pasay City
E-mail ericorlopez@mbcradio.net

Lookin' for a COOL JOB?

SERVICE CREW - for Pampanga, Laguna & Cavite Area
Male (5'4"), Female (5'2"), 18-25 y.o., with pleasing personality, at least high school graduate, and willing to undergo training.
SERVICE ATTENDANT - HRM or Food Tech Grad./Under Grad., with pleasing personality and not more than 30 yrs old.
GRAPHIC ARTIST - Knowledgeable in Adobe Photoshop and Corel Draw, must be creative and not more than 30 yrs old. (Bring Portfolio)
DRAFTSMAN - Architecture Graduate or Drafting Graduate, knowledgeable in Autocad, cart and store design and not more than 30 yrs old. (Bring Portfolio)
SECRETARY - Graduate of any 4 yrs course, good in oral and written communication, computer literate and not more than 30 yrs old.
SALES PERSONNEL - Marketing graduate or any 4 yrs related course, with pleasing personality and not more than 30 yrs old.
ACCOUNTING STAFF - Accounting graduate or any 4 yrs related course, computer literate and not more than 30 yrs old.
INTERNAL STAFF - Female, Accounting or HRM Graduate, Computer Literate and not more than 30 yrs old
EXTERNAL STAFF - Male, Food Tech. or HRM graduate, can drive motorcycle and 4 wheel vehicle.
FIELD OFFICER - Male, graduate of any 4 yrs course, can drive motorcycle, must have a drivers license and not more than 30 yrs old
TECHNICAL STAFF - Can do plumbing, technical works and electrical works

BRING RESUME FROM MONDAY-WEDNESDAY, 9-10 am at
ZAGU FOODS CORPORATION
12 Brixton St. Bo. Kapitolyo, Pasig City Tel. No. 687 0140

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PRISM
PRIVATE SECTOR MOBILIZATION FOR FAMILY PLANNING

USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

The Private Sector Mobilization in Family Planning (PRISM) Project
Scope of Work
Business Training Specialist

Background:
The PRISM Project supports USAID/Philippines' Strategic Objective 3, *Desired family size and improved health sustainably achieved.* It is the main activity for achieving IR2, *Provision of quality services by private and commercial providers expanded* by focusing on three components: 1) increased **workplace** support for FP services and referrals, 2) establishment of viable, mass **market** brands of hormonal contraceptives, and 3) increased business value of FP among **private practice** providers.

Each of the components of the PRISM project includes training activities. These training activities have been categorized into two major groups – health training and business training – due to the enormous training task of the project. The Business Training Specialist will be responsible for developing business-related training curricula, materials, modules, programs in support of component activities and in coordination with the Private Practice Senior Technical Director and other technical resource staff persons.

General Tasks:
1. Review the PRISM technical proposal and other relevant background documentation, including USAID/Philippines strategic plan, documents from other relevant projects in the Philippines (past and present) such as CMS, LEAD for Health and TSAP-FP, JSI/WFMC, BoH, FP training initiatives, the PRISM annual work plans, the NDHS and FPS reports, and other relevant reports.
2. Design and develop the overall business training agenda or strategy for PRISM and PRISM partners in close coordination with the Private Practice Senior Technical Director.
3. Collaborate with the PRISM M&E Specialist and component technical staff to develop monitoring and evaluation tools and systems for the business training activities.
4. Work with the project's HMIS Specialist to develop and maintain a database of business training initiatives, activities, and results.
5. Work with Quality Improvement and Assurance Specialist in designing quality improvement tools and systems for continuing quality improvement to enrich the businesses of the BEST graduates.
6. Work with the Health Training Specialist to ensure smooth integration between health training and business training as they relate to increasing the business value of FP in private practice.
7. Work with PRISM technical and management staff to develop approaches and strategies to anticipate, prevent and counteract potential opposition to project activities from social forces such as faith-based groups.
8. Complete other tasks and assignments as deemed appropriate by the Deputy Chief of Party and the Private Practice Senior Technical Director.

Specific Tasks
1. Identify business training needs and produce a project business training plan that is consistent with the PRISM annual work plan.
2. Contribute to annual project work planning processes by developing a business training plan tailored to each year's planned project activities.
3. Ensure the inclusion of business skills development in technical and medical training curricula for providers, where appropriate.
4. In liaison with other private practice component technical staff, provide technical assistance in the implementation of the business training activities to ensure quality of completion.
5. Work with the Senior Field Operations Director and the Field Support Manager to resolve business training implementation problems
6. Provide technical assistance, oversight and supervision, as needed, to field operations staff in overseeing business training activities, including training of trainers, pre-testing, etc.
7. Together with M&E Specialist, design tools for the evaluation of business training activities.
8. Work with the Private Practice Senior Technical Director, Health Training Specialist and the Quality Improvement and Assurance Specialist to develop and test training modules and materials tailored to meet each practitioner group's needs on entrepreneurship.
9. Work with the Health Finance Advisor to develop a business management training module for the midwife "independent entrepreneur" training program.
10. Work with the Private Practice Senior Technical Director, Health Training Specialist, and the Quality Improvement and Assurance Specialist to prepare training materials for the midwives "independent entrepreneur" training program.
11. Work with the Health Training Specialist to develop a training program to build capacity in drug stores to provide family planning advisory services to customers.
12. Provide technical support to the Field Operations team in developing and implementing business training action plans.
13. Work with the Health Training Specialist to ensure incorporation of business/entrepreneur concepts into the training curricula of private sector health service providers.
14. Provide technical input into the development of evaluation parameters in order to study the success of FP private practice in Indonesia or another relevant country.

Reporting:
The Business Training Specialist will report directly to the Private Practice Senior Technical Director, who will be responsible for monitoring the specialist's overall performance.

Qualifications:
- Graduate of four-year business course
- Masters degree in management/accounting or MBA or equivalent in experience
- Previous work with health-oriented institutions is a must
- Extensive experience in training or teaching with masterful skills in presentations and delivery
- Extensive experience in developing (actual writing) training course designs, materials, visual aids, job aids, and other training-related activities
- Team player, excellent interpersonal and coordination skills
- Excellent in English verbal and written communications
- Ability to use Microsoft applications to include: MS Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and Outlook.

Interested applicants should e-mail their application letter and CV at jobs@prism.org.ph on or before 13th of January 2006. Please indicate the subject of your email as **"Position Code: BTS"**.

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(A Member of the Rustan Group of Companies)

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Is in immediate need of top caliber individuals...

ENGINEERING SERVICES MANAGER
- Between 27-35 years old
- Must be a licensed Mechanical or Electrical Engineer
- Must have at least three (3) years work experience in handling construction / renovation works including bidding and evaluation, program scheduling, inspection and quality control
- Must be knowledgeable in engineering work such as electrical, plumbing, air-conditioning design and fire protection
- Must be proficient in using soft wares required in engineering design and planning
- Must possess a pleasing and dynamic personality

CREDIT AND COLLECTION OFFICER
- Female, between 25-35 years old
- Must be a Certified Public Accountant (CPA)
- Must have at least two (2) years experience in Accounting work
- Must be proficient in MS Office applications (Excel/Word)
- Must be proficient in both oral and written communications
- Must be highly analytical and results-oriented
- Must possess a pleasing and dynamic personality, impeccable integrity and good moral character

MERCHANDISING ASSISTANTS
- Female, between 23-28 years old
- Graduate of a four (4) year business related course or Fashion Merchandising
- With at least six (6) months work experience preferably in the same/related field
- Must have excellent oral and written communication skills
- Must be analytical and results-oriented
- Must have good fashion sense
- Must possess a pleasing and dynamic personality
- Must be computer literate

BOUTIQUE MANAGERS/ SALES SUPERVISORS
- Female; between 25-30 years old; at least 5'2 in height
- Graduate of a four (4) year course
- Preferably with work experience in a fashion retail establishment
- Must possess a pleasing and aggressive personality
- Must be very good in customer relations
- Must be willing to work on weekends and holidays
- Must be proficient in both oral and written communications
- Must be computer literate

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANT for MakeRoom
- "THE TOTAL STORAGE AND ORGANIZATION SPECIALIST"
- Female; between 23-28 years old
- Graduate of Interior Design, Industrial Design or any related course
- With at least six (6) months work experience preferably in the same /related field
- Must have excellent oral and written communication skills
- Must possess a pleasing and dynamic personality
- Must be artistic, creative and results-oriented
- Must be computer literate

QUALIFIED APPLICANTS ARE REQUESTED TO E-MAIL OR SEND IMMEDIATELY THEIR COMPREHENSIVE RESUME, TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDS AND A RECENT 2X2 PHOTO TO:

STORES SPECIALISTS, INC.
Human Resources Management Division
(C/o Executive Administration)
Ground Floor Midland Buendia Bldg.
403 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City
E-mail address: embaysa@rgoc.com.ph

(We will reply to qualified applicants only)

URGENTLY NEEDED

A Manufacturing Company located at Alabang, Muntinlupa City seeks highly competent applicants for:

PURCHASING STAFF
Female, 22-25 years old, Preferably Industrial Engineering Graduate, Computer Literate; Good interpersonal and communication skills; Team player, Ability to work without close supervision; Experienced in purchasing function

ACCOUNTING STAFF
Female, 20-28 years old ; Preferably Accounting Graduate, with background in bookkeeping; Able to produce & analyze Income Statement; Knowledgeable in consolidation of accounting reports; with accounting experience in manufacturing industry.

MARKETING ASSISTANT
Female, 22 - 28 years old ; Preferably Marketing Graduate, with 2 – 3 years marketing experience in consumer products company, must be a self-starter with proactive approach to work, knowledge of and experience of basic marketing elements,excellent interpersonal and communication skills, strong organizational skills with the ability to juggle multiple projects & meet tight deadlines, strong detail orientation with good follow-up skills,computer proficiency (MS Word,Excel & Powerpoint).

MARKETING STAFF
Male/Female; 23 years old above , Preferably Marketing or Business Graduate. Familiar with the Industrial industry, knowledgeable in Marketing research.

PRODUCTION DEPARTMENT HEAD
Male; 22-35 years old; Engineering graduate or any equivalent course, Computer literate, can work under pressure, results oriented, assertive. With good communication skills,can lead, develop & motivate people. Possess skills in controlling shop floor(report making,input/output control, Prioritizing, scheduling,can analyze & solve production related problems conclusively); knowledgeable on ISO 9001 system. With at least 2 to 3 years working experience as Supervisor in any manufacturing industry.

ASSISTANT PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR
Male; less than 35 years old, Graduate of Engineering.With at least 3 years experience as Asst. Production Supervisor in manufacturing environment preferably in Plastic Injection. Knowledge in mould maintenance, repair & machine parameters setting. Knowledgeable on ISO 9001 system and computer literate.

HUMAN RESOURCES STAFF
(1 for Cabuyao,Pasig, & Bulacan Office)
Male/Female 23 years above, Graduate of Psychology or Behavioral Science. Knowledgeable in recruitment, motivation, compensation, training & labor laws. With at least 1 year experience in all HR functions.

PURCHASING STAFF (for Cabuyao Office)
Male/Female 23 years above, Graduate of Engineering. With knowledge in tool and die, import export procedure and documentation. With at least 1 year purchasing experience in manufacturing industry.

For consideration, please send resumé with photo to hrd@rgcgroup.com.ph or call 850-07-84 or apply in person to Uratex Philippines, Inc.-Km. 23 East Service Rd., South Super Highway Cupang Munt. City & look for Tina/Darwin.

CANADIAN IMMIGRATION CONSULTANCY
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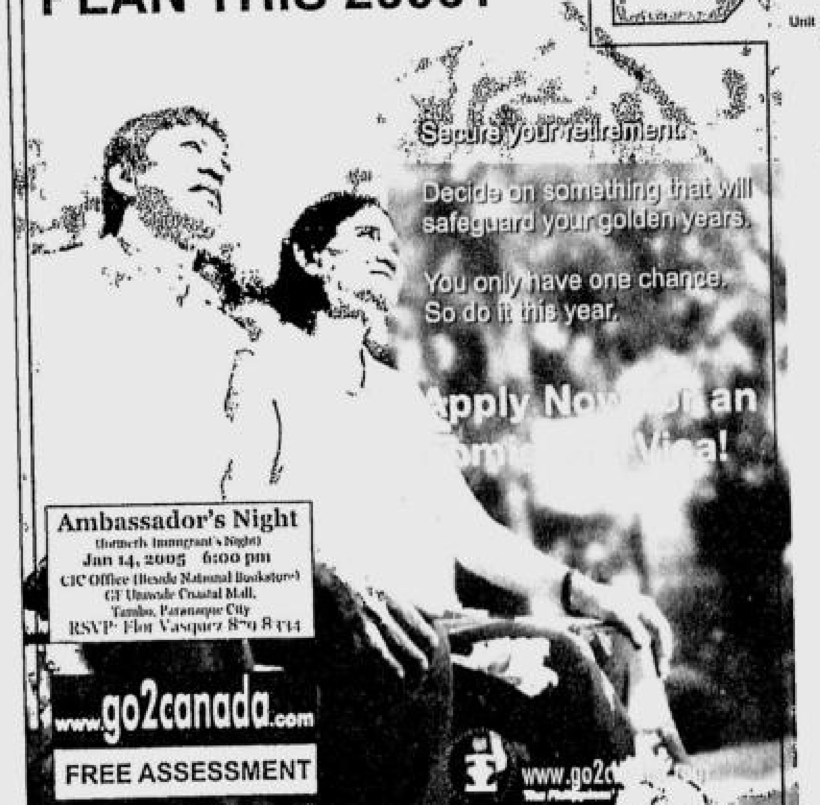
GOT A LONG-TERM PLAN THIS 2006?



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Blk. 25, Unit 4, G/F Uniwide Coastal Mall Tambo Parañaque City
Phone (02) 8790304 / 8797938 / 8790313 / 8790311 / 8526239
8790209 / 8790308 / 8790218 /8790203 / 8790214 / 8526403
8790306 / 8793118 / 8798498 / 8790217 /8790215 / 8790307
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6871049 / 6875937 / 6875401
Email: galleria@go2canada.com

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Phone. 5517980 / 8546725-28 / 8910673
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9-UGF Dona Consolacion Bldg.,
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Email: cubao@go2canada.com

MAKATI CITY
Unit 403 Peninsula Court Paseo de Roxas, Makati
Phone 7517143 / 7517136 / 7517137
7517139 / 7517140
Email: makati@go2canada.com

QUEZON CITY
Unit 202 Pacific Corporate Center
131 West Avenue, Quezon City
Phone: 376-3356 / 376-2972 / 376-2565 / 376-2925
Email: westavenue@go2canada.com

ALABANG
5/F Richville Corporate Tower, Madrigal
Business Park, Alabang-Zapote Road, Ayala Alabang
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Email: alabang@go2canada.com

MALATE
Suite 34, 2/F Midland Plaza Condominium
M. Adriatico St., Ermita, Manila
Phone 5228400 / 5229499
Email. malate@go2canada.com

BAGUIO CITY
Level 3 Unit 10, Pelizloy Centrum, 22 & 24 Session Rd.,
Baguio City near Morin Marketing Corporation
Phone. (074) 4470180 / 3044414
Email: baguio@go2canada.com

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Phone: (074) 446 7999 / 9801 / 9802

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Email: cagayandeoro@go2canada.com

CEBU CITY
Unit 507 Keppel Center, Samar Loop cor.
Cardinal Rosales Ave., Business Park, Cebu City
Phone: (032) 2340111
Email: cebu@go2canada.com

DAGUPAN CITY
G/F Floren Hotel, Rizal St. Dagupan City
Phone: (075) 5158155 / 0920-5816431 / 0917-9077761
Email. dagupan@go2canada.com

DAVAO CITY
107 GF Goldwin Bldg., Quirino Ave., Davao City
Phone: (082) 2225183 / 3051714 • Fax: (082) 3051061
Email: davao@go2canada.com

DUMAGUETE CITY
80 Corner Real and San Juan Streets, Dumaguete City
Phone (035) 4220088
Email: dumaguete@go2canada.com

ILOILO CITY
Rm 404 - 4th floor, Perpetual Succour
Business Center, Jalandoni St., Iloilo City
Phone (033) 5090811
Email. iloilo@go2canada.com

NAGA CITY
3/F Bichara Theater Mall Gen. Luna St., Naga City
Phone: (054) 4726512 / 4726516 / (02) 8790144
Email: naga@go2canada.com

FREE SEMINARS & ASSESSMENT
METRO MANILA OFFICES

- **Uniwide Coastal Mall, Parañaque City - Daily @ 10AM, 2PM or 5:30PM** - See contact details above.
- **Alabang - Wednesdays @ 6PM** - See contact details above.
- **Baclaran - Daily @ 10AM, 2PM or 5:30PM** - See contact details above.
- **Cubao - Daily @ 10AM, 2PM or 5:30PM** - See contact details above.
- **Malate - Mondays to Saturdays @ 10AM & 2PM** - See contact details above.
- **Makati City - Monday to Thursday @ 8AM - 9PM** - See contact details above
- **Robinson's Galleria - Daily @ 10AM, 2PM or 5:30PM** - See contact details above.
- **West Avenue, Quezon City - Daily @ 10AM, 2PM, 5PM** - See contact details above.

PROVINCIAL SEMINARS
- **NAGA CITY - Wed @ 10AM, 2PM & 5PM / Sat @ 10AM & 2PM** - See contact details above.
- **DAGUPAN CITY - Daily @ 10AM & 2PM - FREE** Seminar & Assessment - See contact details above
- **January 8 - CALAMBA, LAGUNA @2PM** - Riverview Resort & Conference Center, National Hi-Way, Parian, Calamba [Call Minnie (049) 545-1278 / 545-1856 | Grace Antiojo (02) 879-8396]
- **January 14 - SAN FERNANDO, PAMPANGA @ 9AM** - Bahay Kamayan Restaurant Olongapo Gapan Rd [Call Grace D. Antiojo (02) 879-8396 | Conrado Javier/Kristine (045) 961-2776 / 961-3782]
- **January 14 -TUGUEGARAO CITY @ 10AM** - Adriel's Restaurant, #20 Rizal St., Tuguegarao City [Call Dr. Mory (078) 844-1305 | Ms. Gold (02) 879-0217 / 0916 749-6320]
- **January 15 - NUEVA VISCAYA @ 2PM** - Brend 'n' Bites - National Highway Solano Nueva Viscaya [Call Tina (078) 836-3307 | Gold Vinarao 879-0217 / 0916 749-6320]
- **January 21 - LIGTASAN, TARLAC CITY @ 9AM** - La Maja Rica Hotel Mc Arthur Hiway, Ligtasan, Tarlac [Call Angie Pamintuan (045) 611-2051 to 2053 | Grace Antiojo (02) 879 8396]
- **January 21 - LIPA CITY, BATANGAS @ 9AM** - Max's Restaurant-Pres. Laurel Hiway, Pilahan Sabang [Call Susan (02) 879-0313 / 0919 353-0491 | Emily (02) 879 0311 / 0916 601-7801]
- **January 22 - DAGUPAN CITY @ 2pm** - Star Plaza Hotel, A.B. Fernandez Avenue Dagupan City [Call Front Desk 523-4888 | Ms. Gold 0916 7496320 / (02) 879-0217
- **January 28 - ILAGAN, ISABELA @ 2pm** - Marjs Hotel, San Vicente, Ilagan Isabela [Call Mrs. Baby Noyra 0917 574-2587 | Ms. Gold 0916 7496320 / (02) 879-0217
- **January 28 - LAOAG CITY @10AM (FREE)** - La Elliana Hotel Rizal St. cor Ablan Ave., Ilocos Norte [Call Ms Josie (077) 771-4870 | Ms Bong 0919 355-0511 | Ms Susan 0919 353-0491

"Don't let yourself be misrepresented. Transact only with authorized CIC Consultants."

THE WORLD BANK OFFICE MANILA
Requires a

Head of Finance & Administration

The **Head of Finance & Administration** leads and manages the Finance and Administration team of the World Bank Office in Manila which is responsible for the delivery of services and functions in the following areas: (i) Planning and Budgeting; (ii) Financial Accounting, Reporting, Control and Fiduciary; (iii) General Services/Facilities Administration and Office Management; (iv) Information Technology and Communication. The successful candidate will report to the Country Director and the Chief Administrative Officer, and in addition receive guidance, as necessary, from the Head of the Accounting-Quality Assurance and Control. He/She will supervise and manage Finance, Administration and Information Technology staff, ensuring appropriate skills mix, staff training, timely feedback and performance evaluation. There are currently twelve staff members in the Team. The position is for a three-year term basis, subject to one year probationary period, with possibility of renewal.

Specific tasks and responsibilities include:

I. Planning and Budgeting
- Assists the Country Director in the management/administration of the country office resources specifically its cost center plans.
- Assists the Country Director and Country Program Coordinator in the management/administration of the Philippines country program resources: (i) in the formulation of country work program and resource allocation; (ii) provides effective support and guidance to the Management Team and other Resource Management staff during planning and allocation exercises; and (iii) monitors implementation of work program agreements, resource utilization and highlights variances, slippages, provides analyses and recommends resolution or reallocation of resources.
- Liaises with the Philippines Country Program Coordinator and other HQ Resource Management staff on a wide variety of administrative, budget and work program issues. Provides inputs for the quarterly Dashboard updates. Prepares periodic reports to the Country Director on the status of cost center/unit budget, highlighting changes and variances, proposes/recommends re-allocation or necessary actions or decisions.
- Administers country office Resource Management policies and procedures, including providing guidance, advice and interpretation and recommending solutions to managers and the country team.

II. Financial Accounting, Reporting, Control & Fiduciary
- Administers the Country Office Accounts: (i) coordinates submission of control reports, responds to findings and recommends resolutions or action plans; (ii) provides day-to-day guidance and advice to staff in the work unit specifically on accounting theory and practice, as well as on compliance with Bank's administrative and accounting policies and procedures; (iii) leads or participates in the development of regional or local country office-specific policies and procedures under area of responsibilities; (iv) provides key input and guidance to unit staff in resolving pending items, or transaction problems and irregularities and ensure resolution in a timely and effective manner; and, upon delegation by the Country Director, (v) exercises the necessary fiduciary responsibilities (including implementation of controls) over the use of imprest funds at the country office.
- Within the SAP framework, implements and maintains adequate system of internal controls over unit's financial transactions and business operations, and contributes to risk management for the work unit.

III. General Services/Facilities Administration and Office Management
- Manages and coordinates administrative and general services for the World Bank Office Manila and other Bank staff: (i) administers Bank properties/ assets in the country office; (ii) provides adequate office space, workstations, equipment and other needs of staff; (iii) oversees procurement of goods and services and the disposal thereof; (iv) ensures efficient and effective transport and other logistic services; (v) administers relocation and other overseas assignment benefits of incoming and outgoing country-based headquarters staff.
- Manages outsourced services, initiates review and evaluation of services; and ensures efficient and effective delivery of services. Coordinates with contractors on terms of reference, initiate meetings, dialogue and provide timely feedback and ensure problem or conflict resolution on a timely and effective manner.
- Provides strategic advice and support to the Portfolio & Operations Manager and the Country Director on the day-to-day office management.
- Provides necessary support and services during major activities i.e. Philippines Development Forum meetings, Country Team Meetings, Staff Retreats, etc.
- Ensures consistent application of Bank policies and procedures.

IV. Information Technology and Communication
- Ensures smooth functioning and maintenance of information technology and communication services for the Country Office. Coordinate information technology related activities, provide guidance and advice as necessary.
- Provide timely feedback and key input in resolving pending issues or recommending resolutions in a timely and effective manner.

Selection Criteria:
- MA/MS relevant advanced degree, preferably MA/MBA (e.g. Finance, Accounting, Business, Economics, etc.) or relevant Bachelor's Degree plus an internationally recognized professional accounting qualification (e.g. CPA, CA, ACCA).
- Minimum of 7 years relevant experience in either Administration, Finance or Operations at the World Bank, or in an international private or public sector setting.
- Ability to handle and resolve all but the most complex resource management issues.
- Strong analytical capabilities and proven skill to deal with Resource Management issues innovatively and independently.
- Ability to function effectively in, or lead, multi-disciplinary teams within a matrix management environment.
- Ability to deal sensitively in multi-cultural environments and build effective working relations with clients and colleagues.
- Strong communication skills with ability to prepare, present and discuss findings in written and oral form.

The World Bank offers a competitive compensation package based on the local market, and attractive medical and pension plans.

Please send your application letter, with a comprehensive resumé with details of your work experience, academic records, recent photo, references (at least three names with full contact details) not later than January 20, 2006. **Only applicants who will be short-listed will be called upon for interview.** Send the above to:

The Human Resource Officer
P.O. Box 100 c/o Classified Ads, Philippine Daily Inquirer
5/F Building B, SM Megamall, EDSA, Mandaluyong City

We are the exclusive affiliate of a worldwide training and consulting organization providing results-oriented training and consulting services to Fortune 500 companies and top Philippine organizations. We have an immediate opening for:

Accounting Officer

Who
- *BS Accounting graduate*
- *Proficient in MSOffice applications preferably MYOB or Quickbook Accounting Software*
- *A minimum 3 years experience in General Accounting*
- *Good analytic and problem-solving skills; attention to detail*
- *Preferably female, 25 – 35 years old.*

To the successful applicant, we offer:
- *A competitive compensation package*
- *A competitive benefit package*
- *A corporate bonus plan*

Please fax or e-mail your resumé and recent 2x2 photo to:

info@meginc.com.ph
fax 638.6990

URGENT HIRING!!!

A Leading National Pharmaceutical Company Is In Need Of Dynamic Individuals To Fill In The Following Positions:

SALES MANAGER
- Male or female, at least 35 years old
- Must have an intensive experience in pharmaceutical products specifically pediatric and orthopedic
- An aggressive team player with strong business sense and sales/promotional strategies
- Excellent presentation and interpersonal skills

MEDICAL REPRESENTATIVE
- Female, Graduate of any 4 year course
- Must have pleasing looks and aggressive personality
- Excellent communications skills
- With valid driver's license
- Starting income of Php 15,000.00

BOOKKEEPER
- Female, Single & not more than 27 years old
- B.S. Accountancy Graduate
- Computer Literate – Excel, Word, Powerpoint
- Must have an accounting job experience
- Must be willing to work overtime

SALES COORDINATOR
- Must be female, 21-28 years old
- with pleasing personality
- Graduate of B.S. Accountancy
- Computer literate, creative, assertive & result-oriented

MERCHANDISER
- Female, 21-25 years old
- At least College Level, with pleasing personality
- Willing to do field work

Qualified applicants may apply in person and are required to bring comprehensive resumé, and 2x2 picture at:

#8 Forla Rd., Commonwealth Ave., Diliman, QC
Telephone Numbers : 951-1997 / 931-1912
Or email at: dil hrad@tri-isys.com

CBN

HIRING ANIMATION DESIGN TEAM

For over forty-years, the Christian Broadcasting Network has set the standard for worldwide Christian television and entertainment.

In addition to global television and animation productions, CBN's vision includes television, internet, on-line and mobile based games, interactive entertainment, podcasting and developing ancillary product lines of CBN's popular branded properties.

CBN is currently developing a new anime series based on the original Superbook. Superbook series has impacted the lives of millions of viewers around the world to re-imagine Superbook for a new generation of viewers and to continue the legacy of the original series.

CBN is building a small development team in Asia for the new Superbook series and future projects. We are looking for people who share in our vision and passion about designing, developing, animating and producing compelling stories that will impact the world with the love of Jesus Christ. If that describes you, contact us and join the team and be a part of the legacy.

- Senior Character Designers
- Senior Concept Designers
- Experienced Background and Layout Artists
- Experienced Maya 3D Modeler
- Experienced Maya 3D Character Animator
- Flash Animator
- Mobile Developer/Programmer

Submit your applications and samples of work at Superbook Team, CBN Asia, 3rd Floor, Sagittarius Bldg., HV Dela Costa St., Makati City or email to john_tan002@yahoo.com before January 13, 2006. The CBN Recruiting Team will be conducting interviews in the Makati City area, on Monday, January 16th and Tuesday, January 17th, 2006.

When submitting or presenting your portfolio/reel during the interview, please do not include originals, as we are unable to return the materials you submit. CBN does not accept unsolicited proposals, outlines, manuscripts or other creative material outside of the scope of being evaluated for employment or freelance consulting work for the positions listed above; if we receive such material, we will return it unread to the person who submitted it.

MEDIA CONVERGENCE INC.

A leading provider of Broadcast and multimedia Technologies in the Philippines is urgently in need of:

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES
Qualifications:
- Graduates of any four-year course, preferably Mass Com, Marketing, Advertising
- With good communication skills
- Aggressive, flexible, focused
- Fluent in English and Filipino
- Computer Literate
- Willing to travel
- 22-25 years old, male or female
- Knowledge and experience in Phil. Advertising industry an advantage

SALES ENGINEER
Qualifications:
- Graduates of ECE, Comp. Eng'g.
- With good communication skills
- Highly motivated and determined
- Possesses good time management skills (flexible)
- Computer Literate
- Fluent in English
- Willing to travel
- Knowledgeable in doing technical designs and plans

Submit resumés personally at Room 303 Golden Sun Realty Corporation Building II, #29 Mindanao Avenue, Pag-asa, Quezon City
beng@mediaconvergenceinc.com

Elite Garments International, Inc.
owner and manufacturer of established brand names for the local and export market

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MERCHANDISER

- * Loves fashion & knows current trends in ladieswear
- * Will be involved in design dev't & retail merchandising
- * W/ experience or exposure in store operations & inventory mgmt,w/ strong organizational skills
- * W/ at least 2-3 yrs work experience in retail or merchandising for local market
- * Mature, with leadership capabilities
- * Female, with courses in Fine Arts, Advertising Marketing, Graphic Arts, Fashion Design Management & related courses

JR. FASHION MERCHANDISER

- * Loves fashion & knows current trends in ladieswear
- * Will be involved in design dev't & retail merchandising
- * W/ experience or exposure in store operations & inventory mgmt,w/ strong organizational skills
- * W/artistic background,at least 2-3 yrs work experience
- * Mature, with leadership capabilities
- * Female, below 30 yrs. old, w/ courses in Fine Arts, Advertising, Marketing, Graphic Arts, Fashion Design Management & related courses

FASHION DESIGNER

- * Will be involved in design & dev't of men's and ladies teen wear
- * W/ work experience in design or retail preferred
- * Will be involved in product sourcing & sampling
- * W/ strong organizational skills
- * Female, with course/s in Clothing Tech, Fine Arts Fashion Design & related courses
- * Submit portfolio of designs for teen wear w/ resume'

Send resume with credentials or fax/e-mail to:
HUMAN RESOURCES DEPT. (HRD)
996 Pablo Ocampo Sr. St.(Vito Cruz) Malate, Manila
Tels. #525-3593/523-0957 Fax # 521-36-71
E-mail: maye@elitegarments.com

A YOUNG AND DYNAMIC INTERNATIONAL DESIGN FIRM

URGENTLY NEEDS

JUNIOR ARCH'L/LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT/DESIGNER
☐ With minimum of 4 years experience

SENIOR ARCH'L/LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT/DESIGNER
☐ With minimum of 7 years experience

Candidates are expected to have **strong design, organizational and management skills.**

Interested candidates please email your resumé stating current and expected salary, recent passport size photograph to: engpok@yahoo.com

Website: www.aepdesign.com

Please submit your resumé on or before 10 days upon publication.

JIMAC INCORPORATED

Total Point Of Sales (POS) SYSTEM PROVIDER

IMMEDIATE HIRING

SYSTEM SUPPORT
- ❖ Either a graduate of Computer Engineering or Computer Science Courses or any related courses.
- ❖ Proficient in PC Troubleshooting, Software Installation and PC Network Configuration.
- ❖ Able to relate with customers with courtesy and develop rapport.
- ❖ Able to solve problem analytically, creatively and effectively.
- ❖ Has good oral and written communication skills
- ❖ Willing to assist client and work on extended hours / weekends and Holidays as needed (On-call status).
- ❖ **Willing to be assigned in either Festival Mall Branch at Alabang, Muntinlupa City; Tutuban Mall Branch at Tondo, Manila City or within Quezon City area.**

PROGRAMMERS
- ❖ Bachelor's /College Degree in Information Technology or any related courses
- ❖ Can Program in **DELPHI**, **TURBO C / TURBO C++** and **TURBO PASCAL**. Experience in **SQL CLIENT / SERVER Environment** is a must.
- ❖ Can Program in **Linux Environment** using **TURBO C/C++**; Background in Web Designing, **PHP**, **HTML** and **MYSQL** is an advantage.
- ❖ Able to solve problem analytically, creatively and effectively.
- ❖ Has good Communication Skills Oral/Written (Tagalog, English).
- ❖ **Willing to work at our Manila Head Office.**

SYSTEMS ANALYST
- ❖ Candidate must be a graduate of Bachelor's /College Degree in Information Technology or any related courses.
- ❖ Proficient in System Analysis and Design, Database Management and Flowcharting. Background in Programming is an advantage.
- ❖ Must be able to think logically and well organize.
- ❖ Has good verbal and written communication skills.
- ❖ Ability to concentrate and pay close attention to detail is very important.
- ❖ Can work under minimum supervision, and able to work with a team.
- ❖ Fresh graduates / entry-level applicant are also welcome to apply.

Interested applicants may apply personally or may send their resumé with recent photo at the E-mail address stated below : Kindly Indicate the Position applying for as the Subject.

JIMAC INCORPORATED
MANILA OFFICE
HRD DEPARTMENT
Penthouse floor TC Plaza Building near cor. Cordillera St. Quezon Ave., Quezon City.
Tel No. 742-68-32/53/59- loc. 117 Fax No. 742-6634
E-mail address: hrd@jimac-inc.com visit our Website at www.jimac-inc.com

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SALES ENGINEER

Qualifications:
- Male/Female, 25-30 years of age
- Architect/Civil Engineering graduate
- Hardworking, self-motivated, willing to work under pressure & result-oriented
- Proficient in English language both oral & written communication
- Should be a resident of a 15 km radius from the stated address below
- Fresh graduates are welcome

Send resumé with credentials or email to whdcorp@compass.com.ph, whdcorp@pldtdsl.net

WORLD HOME DEPOT CORP.
9040-F Hormiga cor. Antipolo Sts., Rizal Village, Makati City
8979924 to 28

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Dream to be a licensed USCPA?
Work, earn & go to the world of dollars?
Join us with our top caliber Dean in **USCPA REVIEW**
Come and Enroll NOW!!! USCPA REVIEW
will start on January 14, 2006

ILDAEIL-EDU, INC.

International Education Center

We are a PEZA-registered company located in RCBC Plaza, Makati City. We are pioneers in providing cutting-edge service for English as a Second Language to our clients in Korea. We aim for international standards in our programs, and have full-time positions for applicants who are:

- ✓ **Teachers**
- ✓ **Those with the Passion to Teach**
- ✓ **University or Graduate Students**

We offer:

- ✓ **Competitive Compensation and Benefits**
- ✓ **Subsidized Housing Accommodations for qualified instructors**
- ✓ **Excellent Working Environment**
- ✓ **Professional & Culture-Sensitive Management**

ONLINE ENGLISH INSTRUCTORS (100)

Responsibilities

- Teaches English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Accomplishes daily reports, lesson plans, extension lessons and narrative progress reports
- Encourages students to high-level thinking (critical/creative/decision-making)
- Participates in training & curriculum development

Requirements

- Creative, hardworking, results oriented and personable
- A college graduate, preferably Education, English, Literature, Communication Arts
- Well-read, fluent in English
- With an American Accent (an advantage)
- Willing to work full-time from 5am – 2pm OR 2pm – 11pm

Email your resumé to **recruitment.ildaeil@yahoo.com** (text only) or drop off your resumés at the 26th Floor, Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City.
Tel. No. 8451026 / 8451040
http://www.callstudy.co.kr http://www.i-bizacademy.com
http://www.themeschool.com

QUANTA PAPER CORPORATION

A fast growing tissue paper manufacturing company of hardworking people urgently needs:

PRODUCTION MANAGER

Qualifications:

- Male or female, not more than 45 years old.
- Graduate of Engineering Course, preferably with PRC license.
- Computer literate (MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint).
- Excellent planning, organizational and communication skills (both oral and written).
- With at least five (5) years experience in handling paper mill or textile industry.

ACCOUNTING & FINANCE MANAGER

Qualifications:

- Male or female, not more than 40 years old.
- Must be a Certified Public Accountant.
- Reliable, with sense of commitment and urgency.
- With at least five (5) years managerial experience.

ACCOUNTING ASSISTANT

Qualifications:

- Male or female, not more than 35 years old.
- Graduate of B.S. Accountancy.
- Computer literate (MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint).
- With minimum 1 year work experience in Accounting Department.

Interested applicants are requested to submit their comprehensive resume or bio-data, transcript of records and latest 2x2 picture to:

QUANTA PAPER CORPORATION
Gate 3 TIPCO Complex, Brgy. Paralayunan, Mabalacat, Pampanga
or send it to this e-mail address: quantapaper_hrad@yahoo.com.

URGENTLY NEEDED

FAMILY DRIVER

- * Male, 30-35 years old with professional driver's license.
- * Presentable looking.
- * Good moral character.
- * Can give references.
- * Has driven both manual and automatic transmission vehicles.
- * Willing to stay-in.
- * Must be physically fit and in very good health.
- * Must be a NON-SMOKER.
- * Must be familiar with Metro Manila streets.
- * Can do car maintenance and troubleshooting repairs.
- * Those who have worked abroad need not apply.

❖ **For the qualified applicant, we offer a salary of P10,500.00 a month with free meals.**

*Apply PERSONALLY with Bio-data, photo and **references** to:*

THE RECRUITMENT MANAGER
80 Roces Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City

❖ **PREVIOUS APPLICANTS NEED NOT APPLY.**

A fine dining Chinese Restaurant will be opening soon at Roxas Boulevard and will be needing the following headcount:

Chinese Restaurant Dining Manager

- ☐ has at least 2 years of experience management level of Chinese restaurants. Chinese speaking is an advantage Not older than 40 years old.

Assistant Restaurant/Dining Manager

- ☐ with experience in supervisory level position of related field. Chinese speaking is an advantage. Not older than 40 years old.

Accountant

- ☐ must be a CPA, with or without working experience. Graduate from reputable school with good scholastic records. Should be below 30 years old.

Accounting Clerk

- ☐ graduate of accounting course from reputable school, with good scholastic records, should be below 25 years old.

Management Information System Personnel

- ☐ graduate of computer related courses. Background with computer repair and installation is an advantage. Must be below 30 years old.

Office Staff

- ☐ graduate of business course, willing to learn, enthusiastic outlook.

Other vacancies:

- **Waiter**
- **Bus Girl**
- **Kitchen helper**
- **Waitress**
- **Food Runners**
- **Bus Boy**
- **Dishwashers**

Should at least be a high school graduate, with pleasing personality and good attitude towards work. Experience is an advantage but not required.

Applicants may submit their comprehensive resumé with recent photo at Unit 2501 Raffles Building, Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Deadline until January 31, 2006.

FLIPSIDE GAMES

Have you always dreamed about making games? Do you play games until the wee hours of the morning? FlipSide Games is currently looking for talented game developers to join our team.

General Requirements:

- Good communication skills.
- **Passion for games and game development.**

Programmers:

Requirements:

- Proficiency with C or C++.
- Bachelor's degree or equivalent in Computer Science or Engineering.

Pluses:

- Game programming experience, either professionally or for education/fun.
- Knowledge of Win32 and DirectX API's.
- Client/server multiplayer game programming experience.
- Tools programming experience.
- Experience in languages such as Action Script, UnrealScript or similar scripting languages.

Artists:

Requirements:

- 3D Artist:
  - Proficiency with Maya and/or 3D Studio Max.
- 2D Artist:
  - Proficiency with Adobe Photoshop and/or Macromedia Flash.
- A specialized skill in one of the following disciplines: concept art, background art, 3d modeling, texturing, animation.

Pluses:

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent in Fine Arts or related courses.
- Previous game development experience, either professionally or for education/fun.
- **MEL Scripting experience.**

All applicants are required to send both a RESUMÉ and PORTFOLIO to resume@flipsidegames.net.

FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

- Female, 28-35 yrs old; preferably U.P. graduate of a business related or communication course.
- 3 yrs work experience as an Executive Assistant or Executive Secretary to a Corporate Officer.
- Proficient in English (excellent grammar and proofreading skills).
- Computer proficient in word processing, spreadsheets, presentation tools and Internet.
- Results-oriented, with analytical and administration skills.
- Excellent comprehension and listening skills.
- Organized and systematic, w/good time management skills.
- Must possess personal and professional integrity.
- Preferably residing in the vicinity of the address below.

Salary is negotiable depending on qualifications.

Apply personally with your resume, photo, and references to:

The Recruitment Manager
80 Roces Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City

Cairn Energy PLC, located in Edinburgh, Scotland is one of Europe's largest independent oil and gas companies with operational offices in India and Bangladesh. The Cairn Group focus is on South Asia where a pioneering approach is the key to its success. Cairn Energy Sangu Field Limited and its sister company, Cairn Energy (Exploration) Bangladesh, both subsidiaries of Cairn Energy PLC, are dynamic and entrepreneurial oil and gas exploration and production companies. Based in Dhaka Bangladesh we are seeking to employ a dynamic individual who will take over the following position

DEPUTY GENERAL MANAGER, GEOSCIENCE

THE ROLE

- Working closely with the Cairn Group geoscience team, you will be responsible for ensuring high quality technical work is achieved in a timely manner in both onshore and offshore exploration and production assets
- Manage the in-house geoscience team and consultants
- Develop the organisation's portfolio of assets and opportunities for input to the Cairn Group Business Planning cycle
- Seek to maximise the value of the our assets with the use of appropriate conventional and innovative geoscience

THE PERSON

- At least 5 years management experience in the field of geosciences in the oil and gas industry
- Geosciences background, both in exploration and development with a strong technical grounding
- Hands-on experience on offshore gas developments along with commercial and economics awareness
- Good communication skills, the ability to interact with people at all levels in the organisation and a team player
- Must be comfortable in multicultural and complex and challenging stakeholder environments

The position will be based in our Dhaka office in Bangladesh. Fluency in the English is essential & Expatriate package is available. *Only short-listed potential candidates will be interviewed personally by the Principal late January/early February in Manila

Interested candidates should send a current CV (soft and hard copy) with your full credentials, stating the expected salary to:

Findstaff Placement Services, Inc.
Suite C PTL Bldg., 814 Pedro Gil St., Malate, Manila (1004)
Tel. No.: 526-0817 Davao applicants : 082-3008081 (FPSI DAVAO)
Email: findstaff@rocholdings.com Website: www.rocholdings.com

FOR MANPOWER POOL ONLY. NO FEES TO BE COLLECTED POEA LICENSE NO. [illegible]

The closing date for applications is 20th January, 2006

EXPLORE/DISCOVER/DEVELOP

INSTITUT SANTRE

The country's pioneer in non-invasive men's body slimming is looking for highly competent and dynamic individuals to fill our growing workforce.

All applicants must be female, personable, enthusiastic, fit, health-oriented can work under pressure, team player, pleasing personality, have excellent service orientation and flexible.

Lifestyle Consultants	25 - 35 yrs. old, attractive, college graduate, w/ at least 4 years work experience in sales and marketing, have computer skills in graphics and regular windows programs, fluent in English and Filipino, other languages a plus
Nutritionists	At least 27 yrs old, BS Nutrition graduate, 3 years work experience, have done assessment and consultation works, personable and speak English fluently
Massage Therapists	25 - 35 yrs. old, w/ at least 2 years work experience, skilled in different massage techniques, licenses and certifications a plus

Only resumés with current pictures and complete references will be entertained. Interested applicants are encouraged to apply personally or send their resumés by email or post to the following address:

INSTITUT SANTRE www.institutsantre.co
2F, 22 Jupiter Street corner Galaxy Street, Makati City, Philippines 1209
Tel no: (632)759-5599 Email: info@institutsantre.com

FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

ACCOUNTANT

- Female
- Passed the CPA licensure exams
- Knowledgeable in financial statement preparation & analysis/computer literate
- knowledgeable in government required remittances & renewals
- with at least (1) year work experience
- should not be more than 35 years old
- good command of written & oral communication skills

The candidate will report directly to the president. She will be required to prepare reports vital to management decisions.

Contact Persons: Ms. Desiderio
Ortigas Center, Pasig City
636-6327 to 29

Applied Technologies Inc. (ATI), the distributor of RS Components (UK's largest industrial distributor) in Caspian Region with head office in Dubai, is urgently looking a highly motivated team to work in our international distribution network

BRANCH DIRECTOR (Industrial Sales & Distribution)

Job Purpose

To manage the overall marketing, sales & distribution operation, so as to train team and develop business of RS Components to oil & gas and industrial sector, in accordance with agreed business plans.

Qualifications, Skills and Knowledge

- Degree in engineering or technical level
- 3-5 years managerial experience in industrial sector and customer service environment
- Ability to make strategic decisions and have good administration and organization skills
- Strong business communication skills in English – internal and external customers
- Proficient in MS office, internet and presentation/reporting skills
- Willing to travel, ability to work under pressure, multi-task confidently and meet tide time deadlines
- Cultural awareness and an understanding of working in an international environment

TECHNICAL SALES ENGINEER (Industrial Sales & Distribution)

Job Purpose

To plan and carry out direct marketing and sales activities, so as to maintain and develop sales support to new and existing customers, in accordance with agreed business plans.

Qualifications, Skills and Knowledge

- Graduate of any engineering related course or technical level
- Minimum 3 years experience in field sales & marketing (industrial selling preferred)
- Ability to identify and satisfy customer needs, manage customer accounts and meet sales target
- Develop strategic and execute marketing plan, follow up sales enquiries by phone and personal visits
- Proficient in MS office, internet and presentation/reporting skills
- Willing to travel, ability to work under pressure, multi-task confidently and meet tide time deadlines
- Self starter, ambitious and proactive

CHIEF ACCOUNTANT

Job Purpose

To manage the overall efficient and timely finance and accounting function to meet HSL distribution business.

Qualifications, Skills and Knowledge

- Degree in Accounting, preferably CPA
- 3-5 years general accounting experience within customer service environment
- Develop financial processes, forecasting, budgeting, financial reporting (BS, P&L, A/R, A/P)
- Ability to make strategic decisions and have good administration and organization skills
- Strong business communication skills in English – internal and external customers
- Proficient in MS office , internet and presentation/reporting skills
- Willing to travel, ability to work under pressure and cultural awareness

Application Details

All positions carry a high level post with competitive package plus benefits. Interested applicants please e-mail your CV with picture to Ramelo Lu on rlu@rsc.baku.az . rameloylu@yahoo.com. **Closing Date:** January 15, 2006

Loyola

Our name speaks of quality service in the pre-need industry and our company ranks consistently among the top 1,000 corporations nationwide. We are moving up and we want you to grow with us as we expand new horizons in sales and marketing. We are looking for qualified candidates for the position of

EXECUTIVE SALES DIRECTOR

- A graduate of Marketing or any Business-related course
- Credited w/at least seven (7) yrs work experience in Marketing, at least five (5) yrs supervisory/managerial experience
- Expert in the application of knowledge in Marketing, specifically in the development and implementation of Marketing strategies both local and international settings
- Computer literate, particularly in Microsoft applications such as Word, Excel and Powerpoint
- Possesses management and leadership competencies; A team player with excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Proficient in building and managing sales organization
- Aggressive and result-oriented

SALES MARKETING DIRECTOR

- A graduate of Marketing or any Business-related course
- Credited w/ at least five (5) yrs work experience in Marketing.
- Computer literate, particularly in Microsoft applications such as Word, Excel and Powerpoint
- Possesses management and leadership competencies; A team player with excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Proficient in building and managing sales organization
- Aggressive and result-oriented

All interested qualified candidates may send their comprehensive resumé with transcript of records and 1x1 photo to:

LOYOLA PLANS CONSOLIDATED, INC
849 A. Arnaiz Avenue Makati City
or email at ebvillanueva@loyolaplans.com

FOR IMMEDIATE EMPLOYMENT

FERNA CORPORATION (The Food Ingredients Specialist) is currently in need of young, dynamic people to join our team. Below are the required qualifications for the following job openings:

PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR (CODE: PD/SS)

- Female, single
- Not over 35 years old
- Degree in BS Food Technology or BS Food Nutrition & Dietetics or any related course, a must
- Has excellent oral and written communication skills
- Computer literate (Windows/MS-Office, a must)

TECHNICAL SERVICES STAFF (CODE: TSD/S)

- Female, Male, single
- Not over 35 years old
- Degree in BS Food Technology or BS Food Nutrition & Dietetics or any related course, a must
- Has ingredients formulation experience
- Has excellent oral and written communication skills
- Computer literate (Windows/MS-Office, a must)

CREATIVE & CONCEPT STAFF (GRAPHIC ARTIST) (CODE: SMD/S)

- Male or Female, not over 35 years old
- College Graduate (preferably with Advertising or Fine Arts Degree)
- With excellent computer skills (MS Word, Excel, Powerpoint)
- Knowledgeable in freehand drawing and in graphic design software, MAC user preferred
- Has experience in conceptualization and in execution of graphic design
- Has excellent oral and written communication skills
- With pleasing personality, resourceful, creative, hardworking and trustworthy

FERNA CORPORATION
The Food Ingredients Specialist
15 Bernardo St., San Rafael Village, MM (near Tondo, Manila)
Interested applicants may call at 2536136. Look for BETH.
You may fax your resumé with 2x2 photo and the indicated application code at 253-5920 or e-mail at ferna@skyinet.net.

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EARLY BIRD RATE IS P495
UNTIL JAN. 17 ONLY

Date January 21, 2006 (Saturday)
Venue Roof Deck - Prestige Tower, F. Ortigas Jr. Ortigas Center, Pasig Center
Time 9:00 AM

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LOGISTICS BACKGROUND

Requirements:

- Experienced with distribution management
- Adept in project management, quality and cost control
- Must possess a Bachelor's/College degree in engineering, preferably with strong business background
- Excellent communication, organization and interpersonal skills
- Can work with less supervision
- Computer literate
- Travel within the Philippines is a **must.**

Please send your comprehensive resumé to:

HR & Admin, LBC Development Corporation
Gen. Aviation Ctr. Domestic Airport Compound,
Domestic Road, Pasay City with
Telephone no. 851-1414 loc. 135
or email: mtalavera@teamlbc.com.ph

3D Animators

Highly experienced 3D animators with intensive skills in 3D Studio Max, Character Animation, Motion Graphics and Special Effects. Advance rendering is a plus.

Flash Programmers/ Animators

Intensive knowledge in Action Scripts, Flash Audio/Video Integration, Interface Design for production of Interactive Presentations. Additional Programming Skills is a plus.

Salary negotiable.

For immediate hiring.

Send your resumés to
info@danksdesigngroup.com

WE ARE LOOKING FOR:

MASSAGE THERAPIST

- **At least 1yr of experience**
- **20 - 30 years old**
- **At least 5'3"**
- **With pleasing personality**

Send Your Resume at
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Platinum 1000, #16 Annapolis St.,
Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila
Tel. No.: 723-4932 • 723-5534 Cell. No.: 0927-5981138
www.bluewaterdayspa.com

An export oriented manufacturing corporation is urgently in need of

INDUSTRIAL ENGINEER (Code: IE)

- Graduate of Industrial Engineering course or any Engineering course with IE work related experience
- With at least 2 years work related experience
- Male or Female
- 22 - 30 years old

INDUSTRIAL NURSE (Code: IN)

- Graduate of BS Nursing
- Male, single not over 35 years old
- Computer literate
- Knows how to drive

Interested applicants are requested to send their comprehensive resumé to:

P.O. BOX 205
Manila
Or email at leilani_mendiola@philbelt.com

A dynamic and progressive company providing logistics services to multinational companies is in need of the ff:

QUALITY SYSTEMS ENGINEER

Engineering graduate, preferably IE, with or w/o experience but knowledgeable in the field of Pollution Control, Sanitation and Systems Analysis.

INDUSTRIAL ENGINEER

Preferably IE graduate, experience in systems analysis, production planning and inventory control will be an advantage.

Submit resumé to:

INVENTORY EXCHANGE CENTER, INC. (INEX)
By Mail - S-608, Ayala-FGU Center
Madrigal Business Park, Alabang
Muntinlupa City, 1770
E-Mail inex@compass.com.ph
Fax 809-0781

We invite applicants for: **BiC**

Our quality comes in writing.

JUNIOR PRODUCT PLANNER

22-25 years old, Mass Communication, Marketing, Advertising graduate or other related courses. Creative, proficient in oral and written English, computer literate, with knowledge in Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator.

MERCHANDISING ARTIST

22-25 years old, Fine Arts Graduate major in Interior Design or BS Architecture, with knowledge in Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator

SENIOR MERCHANDISER

Female, 22-25 years old, Graduate of any 4 year course, w/ experience in doing field work, willing to travel w/in Metro Manila, Bulacan & Cavite Area.

AUDITOR / ACCOUNTING OFFICER

Female, 22-28 years old, BSC Accounting graduate, with one to three years work experience, preferably in the field of audit & other phases of Accounting, computer literate.

ACCOUNTING STAFF

Female, 22-25 years old, Accounting Graduate, with 1-2 years work experience. Computer literate.

CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE

Female, 22-25 years old. College Graduate, proficient in microsoft office applications and can work with minimum supervision.

HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER / COORDINATOR

Female, 23 - 30 years old, BS Psychology or Human Resource Management Graduate, at least 2 years work experience in all phases of HR.

PROJECT COORDINATOR

With experience with an NGO or Foundation especially in fund raising, loves books, willing to bring mobile libraries to poor children.

Applications received on or before January 20, 2006 will be given priority. Please submit resumé to: FILSTAR DISTRIBUTORS CORP. 2nd Flr. Reliance Center Building #99 E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave., Ugong Pasig or email to: iptagudar@filstar.com.ph

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One of the country's premier construction and residential developer invites high caliber professionals to join its success-driven team.

ARCHITECT, URBAN PLANNER, MASTER PLANNER AND INTERIOR DESIGNER

- Licensed Architect Engineer with at least five (5) years of extensive experience working with top developer and architectural firms.
- Knowledgeable in designing and construction of both vertical and horizontal development
- Can determine functional and spatial requirements of projects and prepares information regarding design, specifications, materials, equipment, cost estimate and construction timeline.
- Must have a project management or construction administration experience on residential, commercial, institutional, governmental and/or related projects.
- Should possess excellent oral and written communication skills.
- Not more than forty (40) years of age.
- Must be knowledgeable in MS Office, AutoCADD and other related programs.

PROPERTY CONSULTANT/ BUSINESS PLANNER

- Knowledgeable in real estate, market study, property analysis and feasibility study.
- At least five (5) yrs. mktg. and selling experience of real estate developments

CIVIL ENGINEER

- Licensed Civil Engineer with at least five (5) years of extensive experience working with top developer and architectural firms.
- Can determine functional and spatial requirements of projects and prepares information regarding design, specifications, materials, equipment, cost estimate and construction timeline.
- Must have a project management or construction administration experience on residential, commercial, institutional, governmental and/or related projects.
- Should possess excellent oral and written communication skills.
- Not more than forty (40) years of age.
- Must be knowledgeable in MS Office, AutoCADD and other related programs.

REAL ESTATE SALES AND MARKETING MANAGER

- Male or Female not over 35 years old.
- Graduate of management or related course
- Computer literate
- Extensive marketing experience (planning, forecasting, events mgmt ads & promo.

Interested individuals are requested to bring their resumé and apply in person at:
R-II Holdings, Inc. Architect'l & Construction Firm
No. 136 Malakas St., Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. 925-3301 to 08 loc. 220
Look for Frances Pacheco

MARKETING & SALES REPRESENTATIVE

- Civil Engineering Graduate
- With at least 1 year job experience w/ pre-cast concretes

For interested applicants, please come for an interview from January 9 to 13, anytime between 1 p.m. – 5 p.m. at:

CVG Center, # 36 1st Avenue
Cubao, Quezon City
Look for Mae Virtucio

A PRIVATE ORGANIZATION IS IN URGENT NEED OF AN

OFFICE ASSISTANT/OPERATIONS ASSISTANT

with the following qualifications:

- At least 20 years old
- Graduate of any 4 year college course, Psychology or Social work graduate an advantage
- Good oral & written communications
- Computer literate
- Willing to work for extended hours
- Preferably Ilonggo-speaking

Salary negotiable. Please email comprehensive resumé with photo at: cochouse@info.com.ph

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GOLDENVIEW INTL. GAMING & AMUSEMENT CORP.

A proponent of PAGCOR (Casino Filipino) and one of the fastest growing gaming company in the country, we are inviting qualified individuals to join our current pool of career oriented and dedicated personnel for our future expansion:

OPERATIONS MANAGER
ASST. OPERATIONS MANAGER

Male/Female not over 35 years old. Graduate of Management/Business. Computer Literate. Excellent verbal & written communication skills. Experience in gaming operations and administration with background in Accounting, Finance and HR.

MARKETING MANAGER
ASST. MARKETING MANAGER

Male/Female not over 35 years old. Graduate of Mktg or rel. course. Computer literate. Extensive marketing experience: planning, forecasting, events, ads & promo.

CHIEF ACCOUNTANT/FINANCE MANAGER
ASST. FINANCE MANAGER

Male/Female not over 35 years old. Certified Public Accountant. Minimum 3 years exposure in managerial level, knowledgeable in all aspects of Acctg. & Finance.

ADMIN & HR MANAGER

Male/Female not over 35 years old. Graduate of Psychology / Mgmt. Computer Literate. Excellent verbal & written communication skills. At least 2 years managerial experience, knowledgeable in all aspect of HR management.

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Female not over 35 years old. College graduate. Computer literate, adept in Microsoft Office Programs. Excellent verbal and written communication skills. With pleasing personality.

MARKETING OFFICERS

Male/Female not over 30 years old. Graduate of HRM/Marketing. With pleasing personality and good communication skills. At least 1 year experience in high contact customer service (hotel, resto, etc.).

Interested individuals may send their comprehensive resumé with recent 2x2 picture thru e-mail: hr_goldenview@yahoo.com or apply in person at:

#145 Matatag St., Diliman, Quezon City
Tel No. 926-8037
Previous applicants need not apply.

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LABORATORY – MATERIAL & GEOTECHNICAL ENGINEER, LAB TECHNICIAN	MECHANICAL & PURCHASING ENGINEER	BLASTER FOREMAN – ***experience in Middle East or Africa is preferred***

***Working experience in each category should be more than 3 yrs. ***

Please submit 2 sets of resume with picture, school credentials and Employment certificate attached.
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Cebu	Jan22-Jan24	(032)253-2049/253-2258
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ACCOUNT / SALES EXECUTIVE

- Male or female (Filipino Chinese or Chinese speaking an advantage)
- Graduate of any 4-year course
- Not more than 30 years old, with or without experience
- Preferably familiar with Metro Manila

Please call 845-2251/52 or you may bring your resumé (w/ photo) directly to our office at Unit 10-H, Burgundy Corporate Tower 252 Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City. Please look for Ms. Raziel Azaña / Mr. Vic Solis.

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CAMP JOHN HAY

The developer of Camp John Hay, Baguio City's premier forest-tourism resort, announces the following:

JOB OPENING

ONE (1) BILLING AND COLLECTIONS ASSISTANT
(Manila Office)

Minimum Qualifications: Male/Female, Single, Graduate of Accounting or any related Business Course, at least 1 year experience in any related field, Proficient in English and Tagalog (both Verbal and Written), Proficient in MS Windows application specifically **Microsoft Excel**, Detail-oriented, and Adept in operations of various office equipment.

For interested applicants, submit the following requirements with a Letter of Application to the Human Resource Department, Camp John Hay Development Corp., 5/F Renaissance Tower, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City not later than **13 January 2006**: Comprehensive Resumé with at least one contact number, 2x2 ID Picture, SSS Number, Tax Identification Number and Certificate/s of Employment. **Look for Regina Q. Culzon** Or e-mail your requirements to cjhhumanresource@yahoo.com

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Adequately impressed? Now it's your turn to impress us!

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- A college graduate with excellent communication skills.
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Send info on the following: Personal & Academic Biodata, Qualifications & Previous Work History, Professional and Personal References to < mktg@jaguar.com.ph >

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

The country's leading newspaper is looking for:

EDITORIAL PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

QUALIFICATIONS:

☐ College graduate preferably major in Mass Communication, Journalism
☐ Knowledge in Pagemaker, Photoshop, or any related pagination or editing software
☐ Proofreading Skills, Encoding Skills, Scanning Skills, Layouting Skills

PRE-PRESS SPECIALIST

QUALIFICATIONS:

☐ College graduate preferably with background in Computer
☐ With solid layout and design skills set in a newspaper publishing environment
☐ Advanced knowledge in Photoshop, Illustrator, Freehand, Corel Draw, Pagemaker and Acrobat
☐ Understanding in color management systems
☐ Fluent in both Windows OS and Macintosh environments

DESK EDITORS

QUALIFICATIONS:

☐ College graduate major in Journalism or any Social Sciences course
☐ Must have 3 years experience in newspaper Journalism
☐ With at least 1 year experience in editing and designing/layouting pages

Send your application letter and comprehensive resumé or e-mail to:

HR MANAGEMENT SERVICES HEAD
Philippine Daily Inquirer
Chino Roces Avenue (formerly Pasong Tamo)
Corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City

E-mail: **recruitment@inquirer.com.ph**

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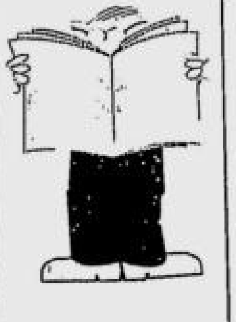

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MARKETING ASSISTANTS

- Male/Female, not more than 30 years old ; with pleasing personality
- Preferably a graduate of any of the following courses: Marketing, Advertising, Mass Communications or any Medical Related Course;
- With above average written and oral communication skills;
- Must be computer literate & willing to do field work.

REGISTERED NURSES/MEDICAL & X-RAY TECH

- With pleasing personality & above- average communication skills;
- Preferably female.

ACCOUNTING ASSISTANTS

- Female; not more than 30 years old;
- Accounting graduate.

GENERAL CLERKS

- Male/Female
- Not more than 25 yrs old
- With pleasing personality
- Computer literate

Interested applicants are requested to apply personally. Bring resume, 2x2 recent colored photo and transcript of records to the Human Resources Department, **MEDICard PHILIPPINES, INC.**, 8/F The World Centre, 330 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City.You may also email your applicationsto:aferrer@medicardphils.com.

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MALL OF ASIA

needs

Cashiers / Checkers

- Female, 18-25 years old
- At least college level

Sales Clerks

- Female, 18-25 years old
- High school graduate
- At least 5 feet 2 inches in height

Sales Utility Clerks / Stock Clerks

- Male, 18-25 years old
- High school graduate
- At least 5 feet 6 inches in height

Interested parties may apply personally
from Monday to Friday, 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM at:

SM Shoemart
SM Corporate Office
Bldg. D 1000 Bay Boulevard, SM Central Business Park
Bay City, Pasay City

Please bring bio-data, 2 pcs. 2x2 colored picture with white background, SSS number, TIN (if available). For female applicants, please come in blouse and skirt. For male applicants, come in slacks and polo.

A DYNAMIC AND WELL ESTABLISHED COMPANY ENGAGED IN BUYING AND SELLING IS IN URGENT NEED OF A TOP CALIBER...

WAREHOUSE AND LOGISTICS MANAGER

- Male or Female; 30-45 years old
- Graduate of Industrial Engineering or Management with Systems Literacy
- Must have warehousing operations experience in a managerial or supervisory capacity
- Must have excellent organizational and people-handling skills
- Must have excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Must possess a pleasing and dynamic personality, impeccable integrity and good moral character
- Must be highly proficient in computer applications

QUALIFIED APPLICANTS ARE REQUESTED TO SEND IMMEDIATELY THEIR COMPREHENSIVE RESUMÉ, TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDS AND A RECENT 2X2 PHOTO TO:

Box # MN - 007 - EM
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Yague & Mascardo Sts.,
Makati City

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Finance/Admin Coordinator

- 25-35 yrs old
- BS Accountancy graduate
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- With good interpersonal and business communication skills
- Results-oriented, with strong analytical skills

Administrative Assistant

- Female, 22-30 yrs old
- Graduate of Psychology, HR or any behavioral course
- Proficient in Microsoft Windows applications
- Self-motivated, proficient in oral & written communication

We offer competitive salary & benefit package, professional environment with continuous training & development.

E-mail us with your comprehensive resume' and 2x2 photo at:

admin.hfsp@hoegh.com

Or send them to:
4677 Hoegh Building Arellano St.,
Palanan, Makati City

MORLAND (OVERSEAS) MANPOWER SERVICES

POEA License No. 213 LB-080503-R

ATTENTION : **NURSES**

JOB FAIR IN MANILA

DESTINATION: USA

MORLAND OVERSEAS MANPOWER SERVICES in partnership with our prestigious employer LUROSE Professional Recruitment & Staffing Agency, LLC (Accre. No. 10075622) will be holding a job fair for ASANA NURSING SOLUTIONS at the MANILA DIAMOND HOTEL in Roxas Boulevard, Manila.

DATES & TIME : January 18 to January 20, 2006,
Wednesday thru Friday,
from 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
January 21, 2006, Saturday
from 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Nursing Assignments will be in the United States. Two Years contract is offered with an option to renew. Competitive salary extended with weekly pay. Accessible Medical & Dental insurance. Free first month travel to workplace and housing rent offered. Assistance in NCLEX licensure and a wide variety of benefits awaits you!

"If you are registered nurses with minimum two (2) years experience COME AND SEE US, AND MEET YOUR U.S. EMPLOYER"

Please bring your 2 sets of resumé/pictures & all documents with original.

For more information, please call:

MORLAND (OVERSEAS) MANPOWER SERVICES
BCM Centre 2322 Singalong cor. Zapanta Sts., Malate, Manila
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FOUNDATION FOR THE PHILIPPINE ENVIRONMENT
Fostering Partnerships for the Environment

The Foundation for the Philippine Environment, an NGO National Environmental Fund, is looking for qualified staff for the position of

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION MANAGER

Position Summary:

Is responsible for planning, leading, organizing and directing all functions and personnel involved in human resources management, including recruitment and selection, training, compensation and benefits management, and administrative functions involving procurement, asset management and control, and formulation and implementation of general office policies and procedures.

Minimum Qualifications and Experience:

1. College degree holder of human resources management, psychology, social sciences, industrial relations
2. Five years experience in human resource management and office administration functions and as supervisor in the same line of work

Please mail your application letter, bio-data, diploma and transcript of records, xerox copy of your SSS ID and Tax identification Number with latest 2X2 color photograph, to:

The HRDA UNIT
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- ☐ Prepares status report of pending/current transactions or tasks handled.
- ☐ Takes responsibility of representation or liaison with different agencies, administrative bodies and courts as required.
- ☐ Prepares project status report and research report on a weekly basis.

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- ☐ At least 24 to 32 years old
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- ☐ Ability to communicate clearly and effectively both orally and in writing
- ☐ Willing to work extended hours
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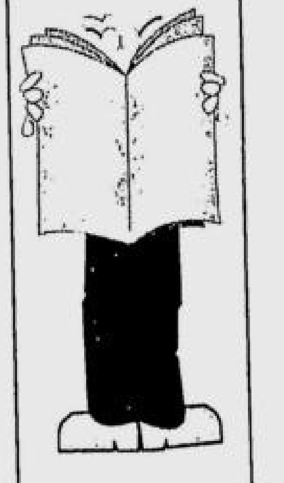

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- Excellent communication skills

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- College degree holder of any Business-related course
- 3 years of relevant work experience in Brand management, Marketing/Sales Promotion, Advertising & Customer Service
- Preferably with exposure on garments, apparel or any consumer products for men
- Knowledgeable of forecasting market trends both local & abroad to project local market trends
- Excellent communication & interpersonal skills
- Highly energetic dynamic & flexible in handling different situations
- Must be competent to handle a business unit
- Result driven

Operations Assistant Manager

- Graduate of any business course
- 2-3 years of experience preferably in retail
- Excellent communication & people skills
- Customer service oriented
- Sales driven

Store Operations Manager

- With at least 2 years retail work experience in fashion or food chains
- Excellent communication skills/computer literate
- Flexible, result oriented, can work under extreme pressure
- Able to motivate store personnel & training skills is an advantage
- Willing to work long hours & even on weekends & holidays

Store Supervisor

- At least 1 year supervisory experience in retail a definite plus
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- Strong leadership skills

Architect

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- Highly creative with strong organizational skills
- Excellent communication & presentation skills
- Retail experience is an asset

Fashion Designer

- Graduate of fashion or relevant course
- 2 years of retail experience in apparel/garments business
- Creative, innovative & trend setter
- Very good communication & interpersonal skills
- Proficient in design softwares such as Corel Draw

Visual Merchandiser (Store Based)

- Male/Female 21-28 years old
- Graduate of Fine Arts, Industrial Design or Architecture
- Knowledge in Auto CAD & Adobe Photoshop & Illustrator

Marketing Manager

- Graduate of any 4 year computer or business related course
- With at least 3 years working experience in any marketing functions
- Excellent communication skills & must be updated with current fashion trends
- Must have good PR, leadership & interpersonal skills
- With experience in product promotion, advertising & other related marketing skills

Marketing Officer

- Graduate of Marketing or any business course
- With at least 2 years experience in product promotion, advertising & other related marketing skills
- Excellent communication skills

Merchandising Manager

- Graduate of Fashion Design, Retail Merchandising or clothing technology
- With 3 years working experience in garment imports; handling fashion brands, worked in retail environment
- Must be updated with current fashion trends
- Knowledge in import/export procedures, material procurement, fit evaluation & product costing
- Excellent communication skills & computer literate
  Job requires frequent travel

Assistant Merchandiser

- With 3 years working experience in garment import; Handling fashion brands
- Must have worked in a retail environment
- Must be updated with current fashion trends
- Knowledge in import/export procedures, materials procurement, fit evaluation & product costing
- Graduate of Fashion Design, Retail Merchandising or Clothing Technology
- Excellent communication skills & computer literate

Please send your resume with picture or you may apply in person at:
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- Has good communication skills and keen to detail
- Can work under pressure and minimal supervision

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Makati City 1231
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- Proficient in oral and written communications
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Interested applicants are encouraged to apply in person, Monday to Friday, with application letter, curriculum vitae, transcript of records, and 2x2 ID photo, or send these to this address:

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#1610 Triumph Bldg., 6th Flr. Quezon Ave., Quezon City
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Or e-mail to: nek_lang@yahoo.com; banna282003@yahoo.com;
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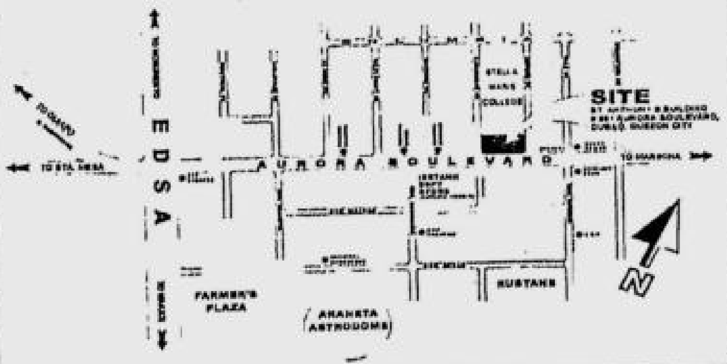

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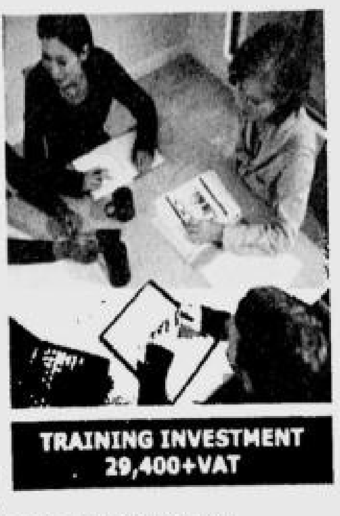
Responding to Conflict: Strategies for Improved Communication

January 25-27, 2006
Mandarin Oriental, Makati



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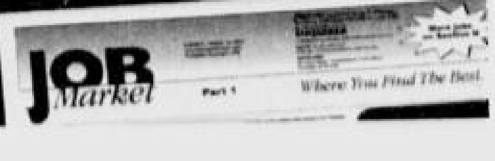

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Editor Raul O. Marcelo
Contributing Editor Regina Galang Reyes

Get ready for paperless office

By Loree Cruz-Mante
Contributor

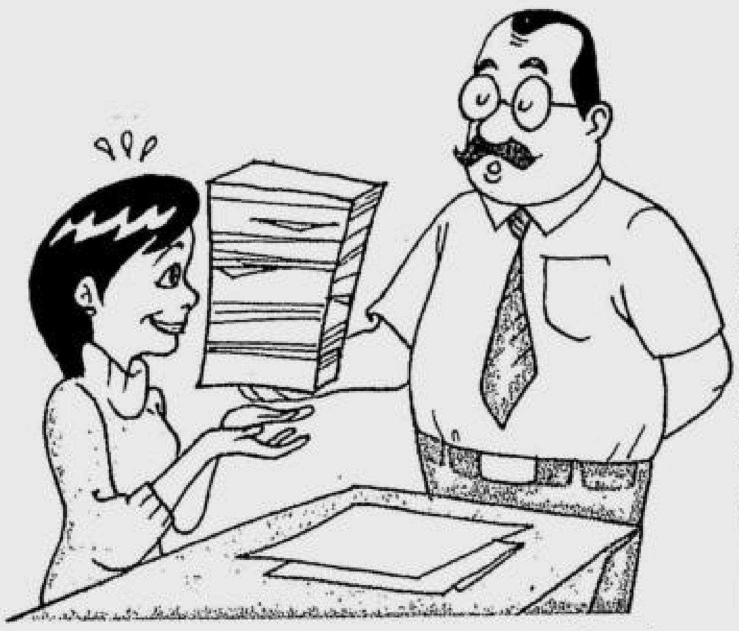


ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

IN A STAFF MEETING, YOUR boss announces:

"We have just received word from head office that we are moving to a paperless environment. Within two weeks, all our memoranda, office communications, reports, etc. will be submitted and circulated through electronic media. Paper use will have to be reduced by 80 percent. We hope you will cooperate."

How will you react if you were in that meeting?

Going paperless and change

It is important to realize that becoming a paperless office must be managed the way change is managed. Nothing is more crucial than paying attention to how people are affected by change, given the natural tendency to resist it.

Managing change also means giving enough time for people to adjust to the change expected. They must be given reasonable time and space within which to reflect on what is happening and its implications to them personally and collectively.

Why go paperless?

The debate on the paperless office continues. Here are some reasons for going paperless.

Reason No. 1: No more trees, no more paper. One argument for the paperless office is that trees will be such a rarity in the future that there will no longer be enough trees to make paper with. The sheer unavailability of paper will force the issue of going paperless.

Reason No. 2: Managing paper bulk. The tremendous amount of paper in most of our workplaces is also causing increasing alarm. The mere size and weight of paper in most government offices are proof enough of how going paperless could declog most of the work that moves from desk to desk.

In addition to the growing bulk of paperwork is the need for collateral jobs related to managing paper, such as filing, storing and retrieving. More paper means more filing cabinets, more clerical time, and more space to accommodate it.

Reason No. 3: Global business. Another argument is that we cannot possibly survive doing business in a world that makes electronic communication a minimum requirement for participation. The digital divide again widens between technology-empowered nations and those which can barely afford the material and human infrastructures needed to support a global paperless business scenario.

Snags

However, put simply, we have no choice! The only way to be globally competitive is to play the game as the world plays it. In many ways, this means going paperless.

There are many areas where paper will remain the preferred medium for some time. In school, test papers will still mostly likely be written out on bluebooks or yellow pad. "Pass your papers" will not be likely replaced by "Pass your CDs" or "E-mail your answers." And it will take a long time before we have "microchip diplomas." It also might be a while before mall shops distribute CDs instead of paper flyers to advertise their sales. We have yet to develop a way by which legal documents requiring authentic signatures can be valid when done using nonpaper media, for how will the bride and groom sign their marriage contract during the ceremony?

More paper

Then there are the setbacks caused by corrupted and unrecoverable files, software plagued by viruses, and the constant threat of piracy, Internet fraud, sleuthing, and stolen identity. Above all, there is the perpetual anxiety over losing valuable data stored in computers—forever!

Contrary to expectations, the demand for paper has actually increased with new technology, as copying, printing and transmitting paper documents are considered more reliable and "palpable" backups to the still distrusted electronic means. There is thus a distinct tendency to print long documents and books and read them from paper, especially where either time or impaired eyesight makes it difficult to read from a screen.

Major challenge

Decreasing the digital divide will always be a haunting concern. The use of technology will always be a primordial concern of development, where the ultimate goal is improving the quality of life of disadvantaged sectors and nations.

There is a tremendous cost to going paperless. Affordability remains a central issue because it puts fledgling economies at a grave disadvantage. They simply cannot afford the necessary hardware and software required to go paperless.

Are we ready?

Alternatively, were we ever ready for computerization? There was a lot of resistance junking typewriters in favor of computers, but the shift was made anyway. ATMs and cell

GET/P.17★★★

What makes a woman happy at work?

WORKING WOUNDED
Bob Rosner

DEAR READERS: RECENTLY, A book came across my desk titled, "Be Happy at Work: 100 Women Who Love Their Jobs, and Why." I had to talk to its author, Joanne Gordon, a Forbes contributing editor. Joanne's message resonates for anyone trying to be happier at work.

Working Wounded (WW): What are the Three Ps that you describe as being the keys to being happy at work?

Joanne Gordon (JG): As I listened to women describe their work and their career journeys, I identified the keys to happiness, the three "Ps:" process, purpose and people. Process means that a woman is challenged by her job's activities. The key to Purpose is that she feels good about the results. And finally there is People: relationships that are supportive and professional.

WW: And what are the three P's that don't correlate?

JG: The best way to appreciate the Three Ps is to look at the Ps that are missing, mainly power, prestige, even pay. I never heard women say that they loved their work because they were famous, had a lot of control over others, or made a high salary. My definition, as expressed by the Three Ps: Happy working women are engaged in activities whose outcomes they are proud of and with people they respect.

WW: Can you briefly describe the different categories of happy people at work?

JG: While all members of The Happy 100 shared the Three Ps, there were differences among the women, and I identified 10 categories of happy working women that corresponded to individual interests, personalities and values. You will likely see traces of yourself in all categories but only one or two will truly resonate.

The Lovers: passionate about some thing.

The Determinators: the uberachievers.

The Heroines: activists who seek large-scale change.

The Healers: improve others' lives via one-on-one interactions.

The Sisters: help other women overcome obstacles.

The Faithful: a strong connection between work and religion.

The Builders: create things from scratch.

The Surviving Artists: make a living at an artistic endeavor.

The Thinkers: problem solvers and analyzers.

The Counselors: listeners, advisors, or counselors.

(For example, I'm a Thinking Determinator.)

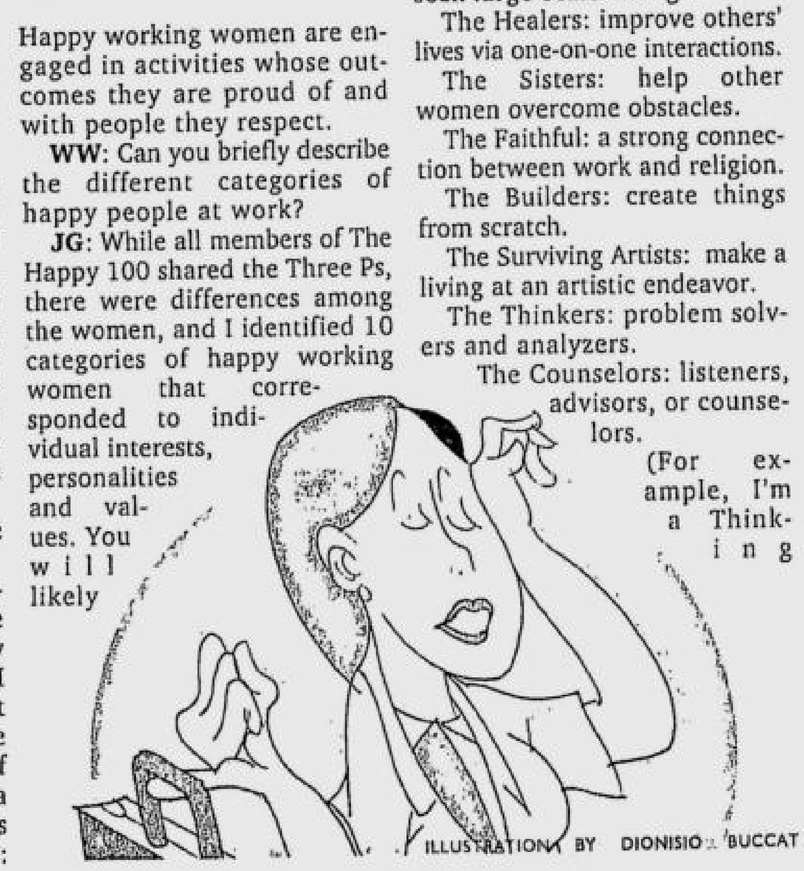


ILLUSTRATION BY DIONISIO BUCCAT

WW: Please distinguish between a perfect job and a happy person at work?

JG: There are no happy jobs, one person's nightmare occupation is another person's dream job. The trick is to find a job that matches your own skills, values and personality.

WW: What was your biggest surprise as you wrote this book?

JG: Two: First, happy workers are not necessarily people hardwired for happiness. The Happy 100 is a group that has experienced hardship on many levels, both personally and professionally. I was pleasantly surprised at how truly optimistic and resilient women can be, and how personally fulfilling work has the potential to be. Also, I became aware at how long one's working life is. Many of us could potentially work for 50 years! That's a lot of time to experience different types of jobs, and to reinvent ourselves many times over. We maintain some control by proactively evaluating the Three Ps at different points in our lives.

(Mr. Rosner, an internationally syndicated columnist, author and speaker, is based in Seattle, Washington, USA. E-mail him at bob@workingwounded.com.)

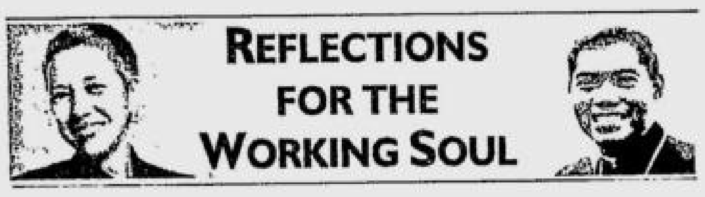
Being 'wise men'

By Bishop Precioso D. Cantillas, SDB, DD

TRADITIONALLY, THE THREE KINGS ARE PART OF THE Christmas story. As narrated in today's Gospel, they were supposedly wise men from the East who saw a bright star, which prompted them to look for the "newborn king of the Jews." Reflecting on them in the context of work, they could well represent the workers who discover something bright or extraordinary in the daily work or in the usual workplace, and who make a journey towards attaining a greater fulfillment and satisfaction in the job—making work and the workplace significant elements in their happiness in life.

The salesgirl, security guard, machine operator and thousands of other laborers, who perform routine tasks in their daily work, could get so bored in their jobs and find no excitement in the workplace or in the people they work with. The monotony of repetitive tasks, the heavy burden of work or the inconvenient work schedule, the hard-to-please boss or rough-mannered coworker and other work hazards could make the workers slowly succumb to a sense of loss of meaning and value of life and work.

Yet every human being, with whatever kind of job he takes, even the most menial one, is like the "wise men"—being created in the image and likeness of God—who can discern the "bright star" in the everyday situation of life and work. Humble prayer and reflection integrated to the work schedule and activities, will help him grasp the deeper meaning and value of work, and give him the strength and courage to render a loving homage to his God and Creator. (*E-mail the author at* mfvg@skyinet.net)



REFLECTIONS FOR THE WORKING SOUL

Following your star

By Teresa R. Tunay, OCDS

SPEAKING OF ASTROLOGERS—I USED TO WORK WITH them as they would provide horoscopes and astrological forecasts to the publications I edited. One stood out as a particularly dyed-in-the-wool stargazer. Astrology oozed out of her; everything that came out of her mouth would be traced back to the position of the planets and the stars. Delays in magazine shipment, cancelled contracts, vehicular accidents, all kinds of miscommunication? "*Kasi* Mercury retrograde!" she'd explain. The big boss in a surly mood again today? "*Pasensya ka*, Cancer *kasi siya*, Cancerians are by nature moody and crabby!" Your coworker a perennial warmonger? "*Ay*, don't mind her! Appearances *lang iyan* because her Mars is in Sagittarius and her ascendant is Leo! *Akala mo palaging may kaaway kung magsalita*!"

Indeed, conversation with her would be trying and entertaining at the same time, forcing me to wade through her jargon to understand her and offering me a literally cosmic perspective of things. Despite her "different" outlook, she was always welcomed by the office staff. I think this was because of her sincerity and conviction—she believed in her craft and was a genuine seeker of the light. Just like the three magi in today's Gospel, she followed her star and found her niche in life, barely surviving at times, and at other times enjoying a season of plenty, yet always content that her science was helping others find their own star.

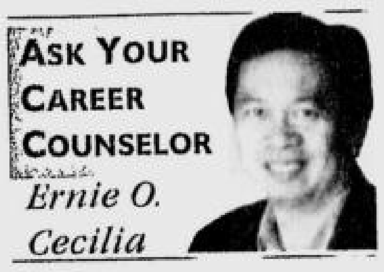
Sincerely believing in the worth of our work and being grateful for it as a gift from God could be the star guiding us to right action in whatever work we're in, thereby rewarding us with contentment at all times. And we don't even have to worry about where Pluto or Venus could be in the skies now. (*E-mail the author at* teresa_de_manila@yahoo.com)

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Gospel: Matthew 2: 1-12

"Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage."

'How can I have a better start this year?'



ASK YOUR CAREER COUNSELOR
Ernie O. Cecilia

WHEN I LOOK BACK AT MY five years of working, I notice that I seem to be doing the same things and haven't accomplished much. I was first furious, then scared, by a line in your column late last year. You wrote about insanity as doing the same things over and over and expecting different results.

I think I'm doing the right thing—in fact, I always get good performance ratings, but I have no major accomplishments to brag about. I want to continue with my career with my present employer and aim for a promotion.

One of my weaknesses is managing my time at work. There are so many distractions that I can't focus on my job. I have a few backlogs every now and then, but we are no longer allowed to charge overtime pay. I need more tips on how to do more and better, especially at the start of the year.

Raring to Go

It is truly rarely that people at work admit their weaknesses. Congratulations for the courage to admit yours. You can't get treated for a disease unless you first tell your physician, "Doctor, doctor, I am sick."

Most successful employees—highly paid and often promoted—are usually those seen as hard workers by the powers that be. If you look around in your organization right now, the people who continually move up are those perceived by management as working hard. They contribute to the achievement of the company's goals by doing the tasks required of them—and mostly exceeding expectations. The rest who just aimlessly plod their way everyday through paperwork and routine tasks are those who stay doing the same things almost all their lives.

Most important resource

Time is your most important resource. Money spent can be recovered, but time spent is gone, never to return. Most successful people know this and make the most of their time.

Considering the traffic situation, it is best for employees to wake up early and be in their workstations on time. If you really want to make the most of your time doing productive work, perhaps you can make it your New Year's resolution to spend two extra hours in the workplace—one hour before starting time and one hour after quitting time —without expecting any extra pay. Consider this an investment in your career.

Experts say that an uninterrupted hour of productive work can produce the same results as three ordinary hours of usual work. Come in an hour earlier than you're expected to, buckle down to work, focus on your tasks for the day, extend an hour when everybody is going home and you can be sure that you shall have done the most. This is of course assuming that you will do what you have to do efficiently and effectively.

Studies reveal that the most successful employees spend more time doing productive work. The top 10 percent money earners spend an average of 50 or more hours per week. In America, the average workweek of the top 1 percent money earners is 56 hours or more per week. And when they work, the really work—early, steadily and devoid of distractions.

Deal with distractions

There is usually little work done by employees during ordinary working hours because of distractions —chatting, telephone calls, extended coffee breaks and lunches, and other nonwork-related tasks. But how do you deal with distractions? Simple—plan your work well, stay with your plan and learn to say "No."

When somebody wants to talk to you about Uma and Cass, or Bob and Commander

HOW/P.17★★★

‘I work 10 hours a day!’

By Tita Datu Puangco

Advice
FOR THE ANXIOUS PERSON AT WORK

I WORK AS AN EXECUTIVE SECretary to the regional manager of a multinational company. The challenge for me is the fact that my boss manages three other countries. It is typical for me to work 10 hours in a day. I am not complaining, since I like working with my boss who is a visionary. In fact, the past five years I have been working with him is like going to MBA school; he is a strategic thinker but at the same time has a strong concern for people. But the fact is I am overwhelmed with work and eight hours are not enough to cover all the urgent and important things during the day.

My concern is this. Next year, my boyfriend and I plan to get married. I don’t think I can keep the same pace now that I am still single. I am 32 years old, marrying rather late so my future husband and I plan to have our first baby right away. What should I do? Should I remain in a job that I enjoy or should I ask my boss for transfer to another job? Please advise.

Busy Body

Thank you for your letter. You are about to make tough decisions. Or better still, life-changing decisions or major transitions. From a “managing change” point of view, I would suggest you try to find solutions within your existing job first. Trying to manage many changes all at once can be stressful. What are some of your options?

First, try to track your daily schedule. Many people who are overwhelmed with work feel they have lost control of their work. This happens when we allow situations, people and circumstances dictate on our schedules. The truth is you have actual control of 70 percent of the activities in front of you. Try reserving 30 minutes at the start or the end of the day to plan your work in terms of setting priorities. You will remove the sense of being swamped and out of control.

Second, adopt a mindset of “living the present moment well.” This means concentrating on the task in front of you and do it with perfection and completion. Let us say you have a complex report that you have to complete; try the “chunking” technique. Do the table of contents and tell yourself to complete parts one and two today. Living the present moment helps you to relax and mentally empty yourself of other concerns for those moments that you are working on a specific task.

Three, be aware of your biorhythm. Are you a lark or an owl? You are a lark if you are full of energy in the morning and an owl if you gain more energy towards the afternoon and evening. You can then cluster the activities that provide the most challenge at your peak hours.

Now let us say, you have done everything within your capability to manage your time and stress, I suggest you have a heart-to-heart talk with your boss. You can explain your great desire to continue to serve him but with your impending change in lifestyle, you may need another person to assist you.

I understand that in a multinational environment, getting an extra person is difficult since creating a new position may need permission from the head office. You can request, not for a full-time person, but for a person to fill in your post, after regular hours. Someone who can put in two or three hours a day will do. If this happens, make sure that tasks are properly handed to the other person. You may also need to mentor the person to make sure that work is done properly.

If these solutions don’t work, then you may need transfer to a less hectic job. But knowing the pace of work in most multinational companies today, you will be fortunate if you will find such a job.

In closing, let me greet you best wishes and congratulations on your forthcoming wedding.

(Ms Puangco is CEO of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting. For advice and feedback, e-mail advice@ancillaedc.com.ph *or call tel. nos. 8922895/96/98.)*

‘How can I have a better start this year?’

From page 16★★★

Nene, be polite and firm in telling him or her that you need to finish your work first. Unless your text message tells you it’s an emergency, refrain from texting back until your task is done. Don’t spend time on unnecessary phone calls. Reduce the verbiage of your communications–oral or written. Always remember that time spent on things that will not lead to your promotion or extra income is unproductive use of time.

Develop the habit

Pretend that there is a contest that gives P1 million to the hardest working employee in your company. The contest starts on Jan, 2 and ends on Dec. 30. Aspire for that imaginary prize money. Follow my tips in this column–start by coming in and working one hour before everybody does, spend your day doing uninterrupted, productive work, and avoid distractions.

Continue to imagine that the contest is ongoing the whole year through and that judges are always around to watch what you're doing, whether your bosses are there or not. Before you know it, this whole thing becomes a great habit.

Ask for more

If you religiously do what I tell you, this is what's going to happen. You will most likely run out of things to do, since you'll be able to complete your usual tasks in lesser time than it used to take you. When this happens, go to your boss, tell him that you've done your tasks for the day and ask how you can help him with his tasks.

This is what I call the “brag and grab” strategy. You tell your boss that your job is done beyond expectations and you want to help him complete his tasks by giving you a piece of his job. This is one way of learning your boss’ job. If you do this sincerely and in a nonthreatening way, your boss will oblige and delegate more to you.

This will work to your advantage if you don’t feel that you are being taken advantage of. As long as you don’t care who gets the credit for doing the work of your boss, you can do so much that can lead to your promotion and higher pay.

I did this strategy quite often when I was in the corporate world. Believe me, it worked for me. When the time comes that my boss would be promoted, guess whom he recommended to replace him? Of course, he was comfortable turning over the department to someone who already knew what the job was all about.

Start early—If you want to start the year right. Work hard to complete your tasks, even if you have to spend more time than others. Get noticed by your boss as somebody who completes his tasks beyond expectations and even asks for more things to do.

Some bosses think that people who do best at anything entrusted to them can be entrusted to do best anything else—including greater responsibility.

(Public service announcement: There will be a grand reunion of all alumni of the University of Nueva Caceres, Naga City in September this year. Alumni in Metro Manila can e-mail me their contact details so that the Organizing Committee can contact them.)

(Mr. Cecilia is the president and CEO of EC Business Solutions and Career Center, a human resource consulting firm. He was the president of Personnel Management Association of the Philippines or PMAP in 1999. His career books are available at popular bookstores. Send feedback to ernie_cecilia@yahoo.com.)

Get ready for paperless office

From page 16★★★

phones are dramatic innovations, which show the Filipinos’ aptitude for the high-tech.

We may not be ready for the paperless office, but we can move slowly to a state of readiness. It just requires that those responsible for effecting the move must approach the process with sensitivity, innovativeness and a good set of people skills to understand the dynamics of change. The boss’ announcement at the start of this article will not push the case for going paperless one inch forward.

In the meantime, what does appear more realistic are “less paper offices.” With conscious and deliberate planning, the paper volume in many, many offices can actually be reduced. Some banks, for example, now use single forms for several transactions. Some company newsletters are e-mailed rather than printed. Supporting documents can be minimized, and attachments can be stored electronically rather than stapled to a request.

Even though paper will likely be banned from workplaces at some future time, there are paper things some people feel should never disappear. They are considered part of a rich heritage of romance and chivalry, and must be preserved. Congratulatory notes written in the boss’ longhand. Kids’ paper drawings to hang over one’s desk. Autographed books. Handwritten love letters. Journals and diaries.

In the end, the paperless issue is one of communication. People must connect through whatever means: through paper or without it.

And so whether one chooses to go jurassic and revival, or high-tech and digital, a touch, a smile, a word, a hug will never cease to be the best form of connectivity in the workplace, no matter how much or how little paper it has.

(I wish to acknowledge insights from Prof. Melinda dP. Bandalaria, Paz Resurreccion Alip, Carol Gano, Emery Graham, Gerard Ravasco and Kristine Salazar, my professor and classmates at the UP Open University.)

(Ms Mante is a human resources and organization development practitioner, published writer, and career consultant with leading transitions management firm, DBM. She is also with the Interspacers Writers Group of the Institute for Studies in Asian Church and Culture. E-mail her at lcmante@yahoo.com.)

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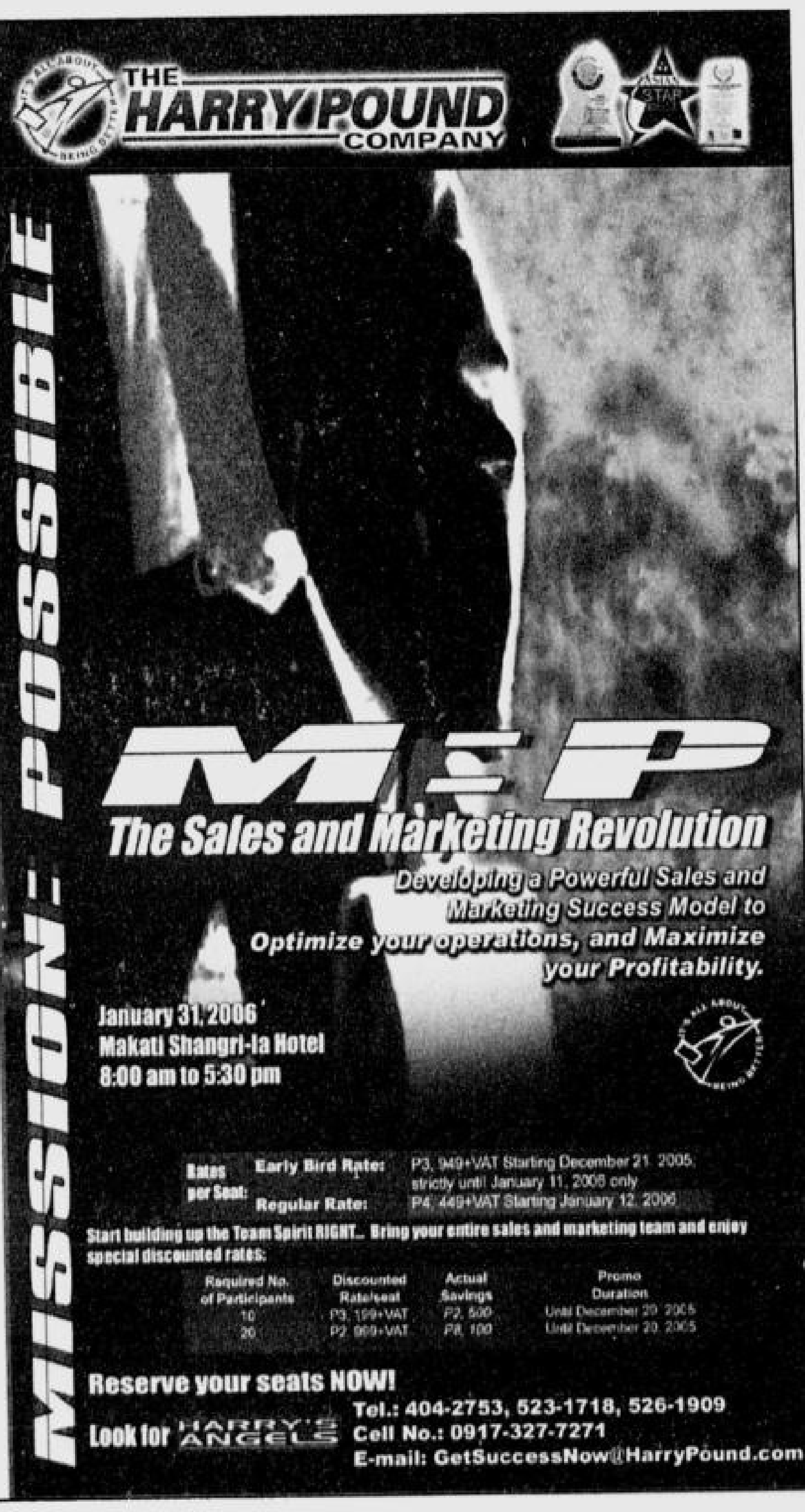

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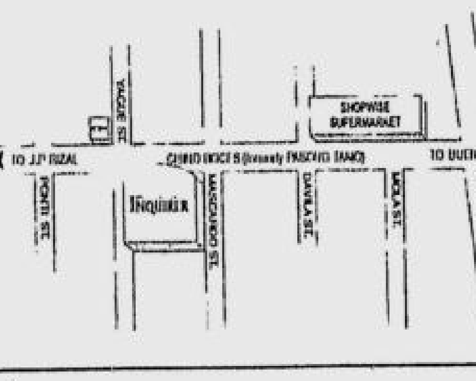

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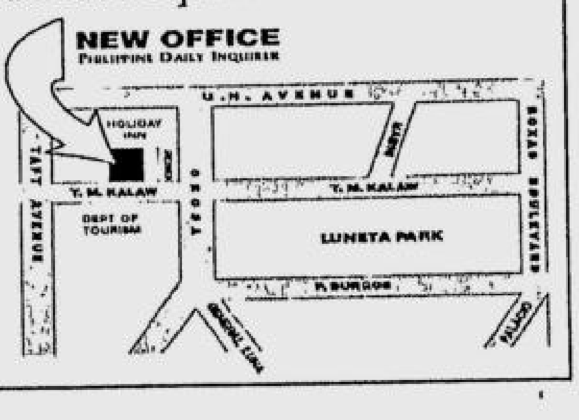
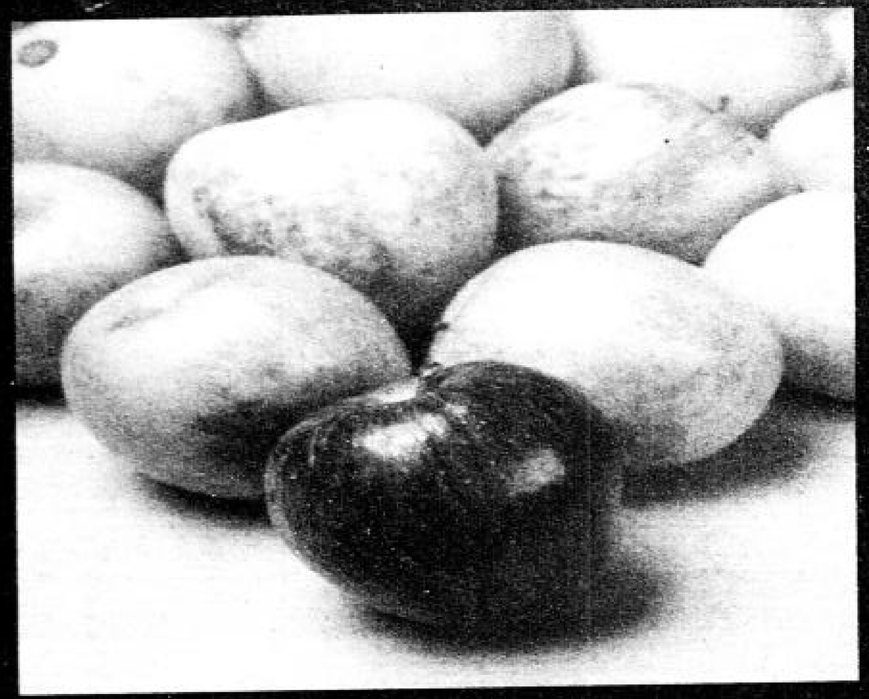


ARE YOU...

...a STAND-OUT?



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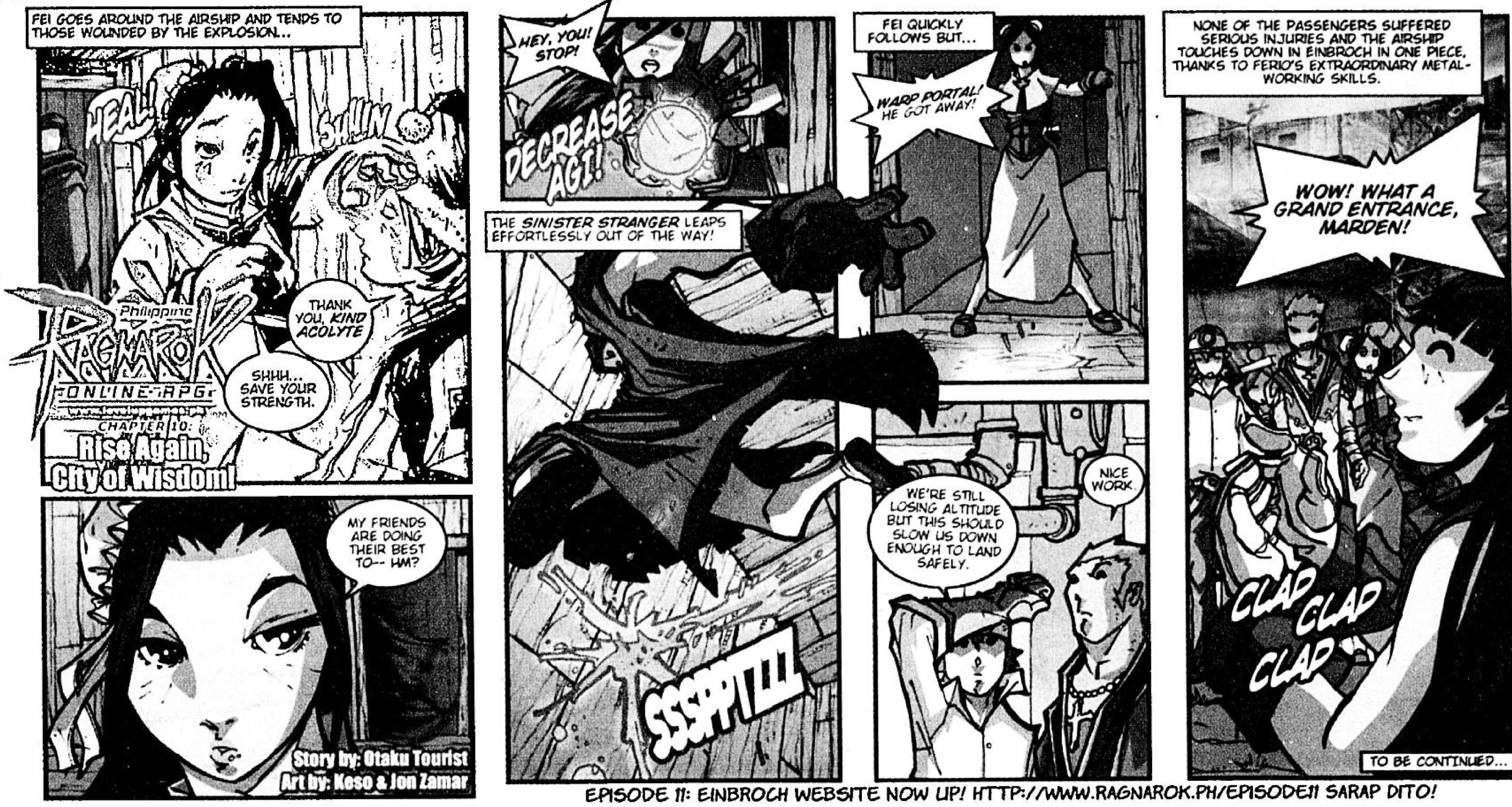
RAGNAROK

BY LEVEL UP GAMES


FEI GOES AROUND THE AIRSHIP AND TENDS TO THOSE WOUNDED BY THE EXPLOSION...
HEAL!
SHIIN
THANK YOU, KIND ACOLYTE
SHHH... SAVE YOUR STRENGTH.
Philippine Ragnarok ONLINE RPG
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CHAPTER 10:
Rise Again, City of Wisdom!
MY FRIENDS ARE DOING THEIR BEST TO-- HM?
Story by: Otaku Tourist
Art by: Keso & Jon Zamar
HEY, YOU! STOP!
DECREASE AGI!
THE SINISTER STRANGER LEAPS EFFORTLESSLY OUT OF THE WAY!
SSSPPTZZZ
FEI QUICKLY FOLLOWS BUT...
WARP PORTAL! HE GOT AWAY!
WE'RE STILL LOSING ALTITUDE BUT THIS SHOULD SLOW US DOWN ENOUGH TO LAND SAFELY.
NICE WORK.
NONE OF THE PASSENGERS SUFFERED SERIOUS INJURIES AND THE AIRSHIP TOUCHES DOWN IN EINBROCH IN ONE PIECE, THANKS TO FERIO'S EXTRAORDINARY METAL-WORKING SKILLS.
WOW! WHAT A GRAND ENTRANCE, MARDEN!
CLAP CLAP CLAP
TO BE CONTINUED...

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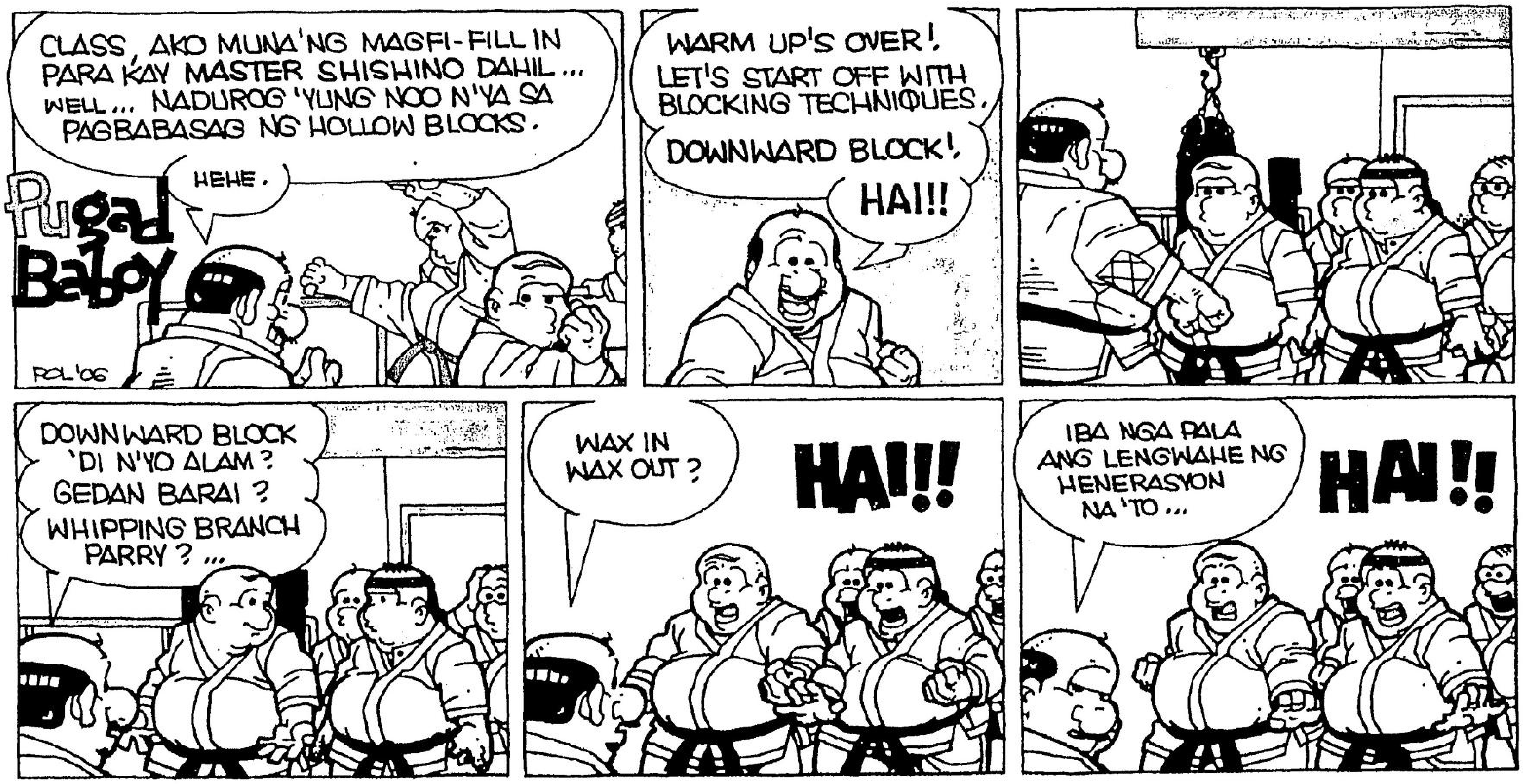
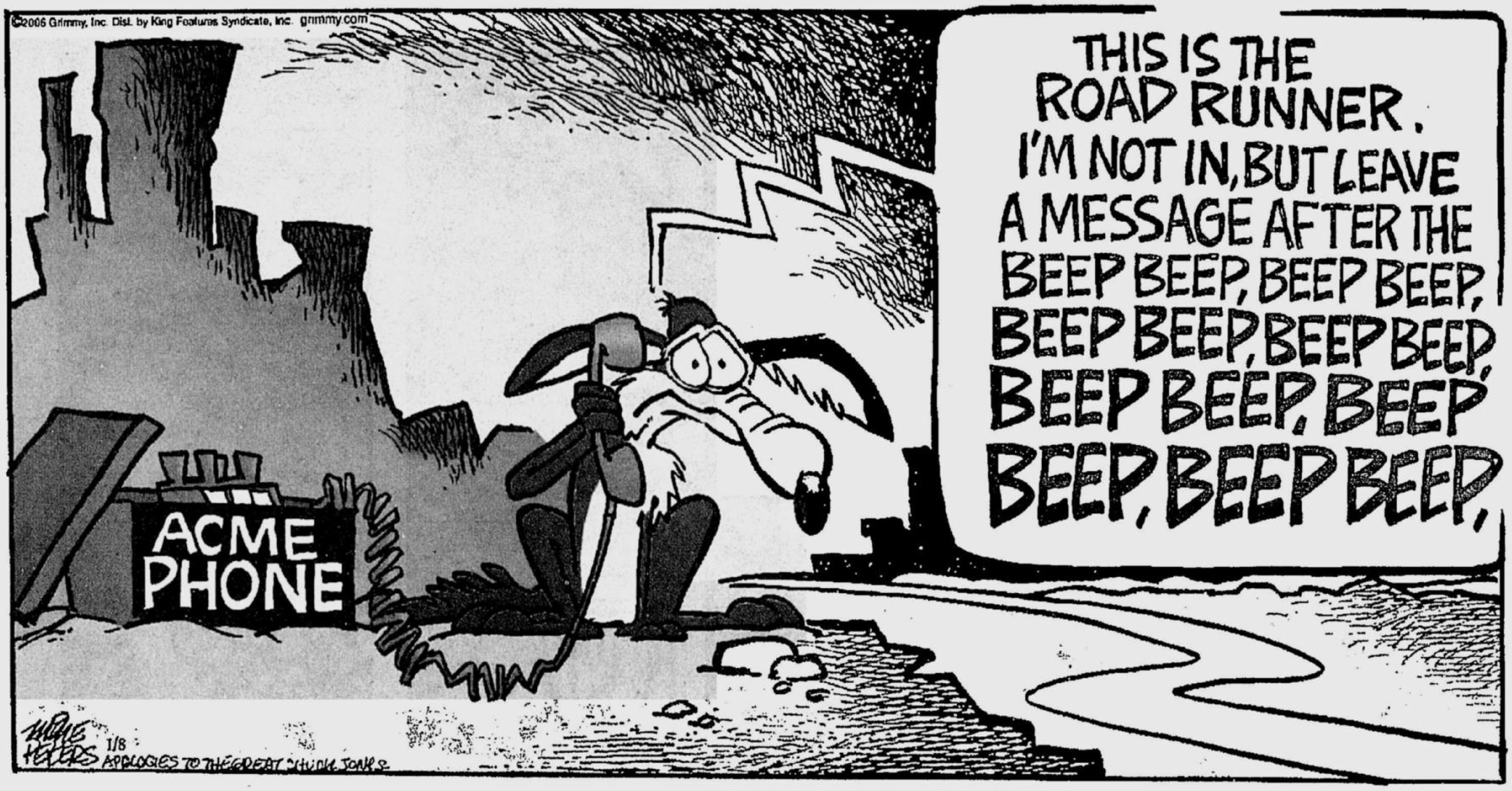
PUGAD BABOY

BY POL MEDINA JR.


CLASS, AKO MUNA'NG MAGFI-FILL IN PARA KAY MASTER SHISHINO DAHIL... WELL... NADUROG 'YUNG NOO N'YA SA PAGBABASAG NG HOLLOW BLOCKS.
HEHE.
Pugad Baboy
POL '06
WARM UP'S OVER! LET'S START OFF WITH BLOCKING TECHNIQUES.
DOWNWARD BLOCK!
HAI!!
DOWNWARD BLOCK 'DI N'YO ALAM? GEDAN BARAI? WHIPPING BRANCH PARRY? ...
WAX IN WAX OUT?
HAI!!
IBA NGA PALA ANG LENGWAHE NG HENERASYON NA 'TO...
HAI!!

MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS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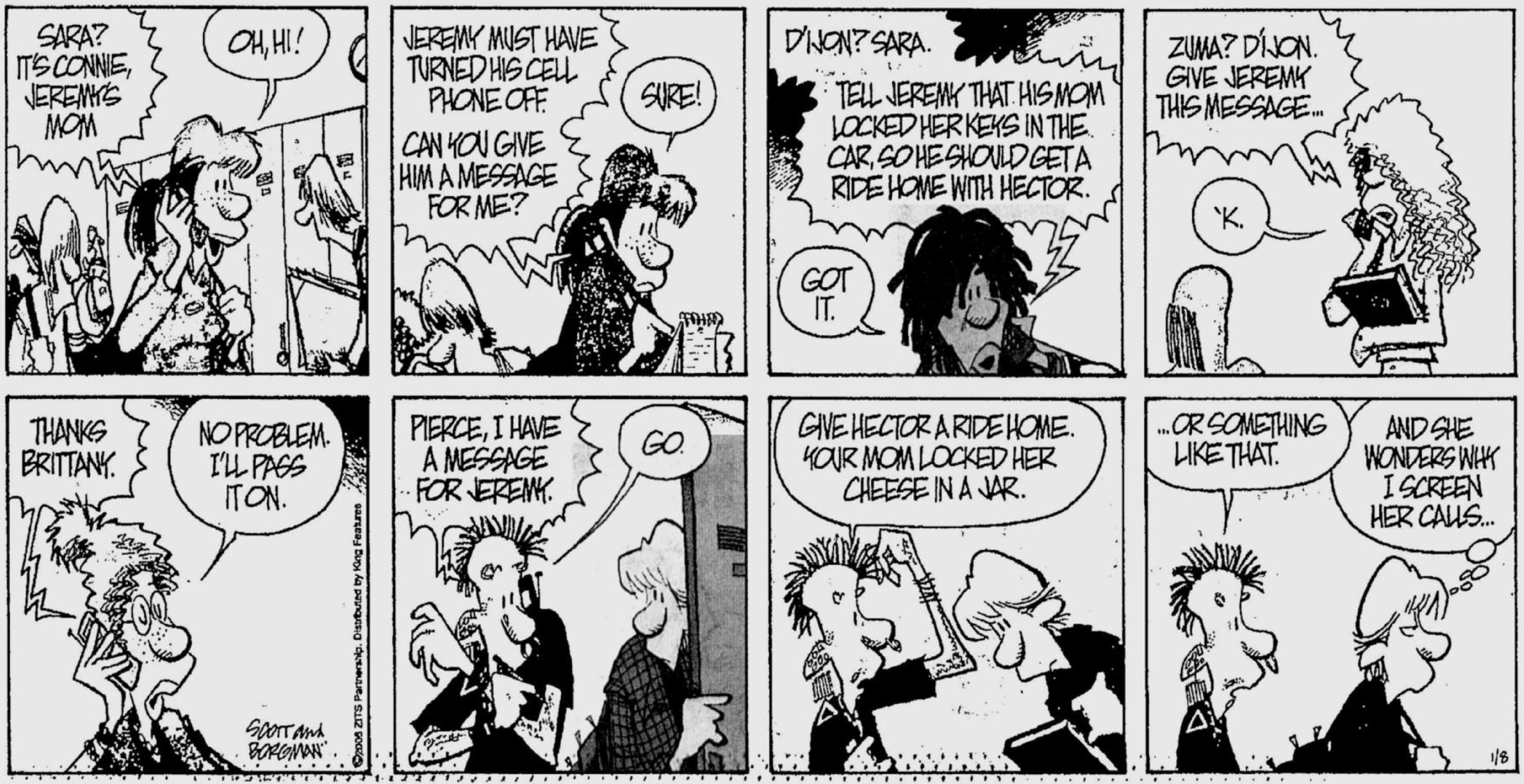
THIS IS THE ROAD RUNNER. I'M NOT IN, BUT LEAVE A MESSAGE AFTER THE BEEP BEEP, BEEP BEEP, BEEP BEEP, BEEP BEEP, BEEP BEEP, BEEP BEEP, BEEP, BEEP, BEEP,
ACME PHONE
MIKE PETERS 1/8
APOLOGIES TO THE GREAT CHUCK JONES

ZITS

BY JERRY SCOTT AND JIM BORGMAN


SARA? IT'S CONNIE, JEREMY'S MOM
OH, HI!
JEREMY MUST HAVE TURNED HIS CELL PHONE OFF.
SURE!
CAN YOU GIVE HIM A MESSAGE FOR ME?
D'JON? SARA.
TELL JEREMY THAT HIS MOM LOCKED HER KEYS IN THE CAR, SO HE SHOULD GET A RIDE HOME WITH HECTOR.
GOT IT.
ZUMA? D'JON. GIVE JEREMY THIS MESSAGE...
'K.
THANKS BRITTANY.
NO PROBLEM. I'LL PASS IT ON.
SCOTT AND BORGMAN
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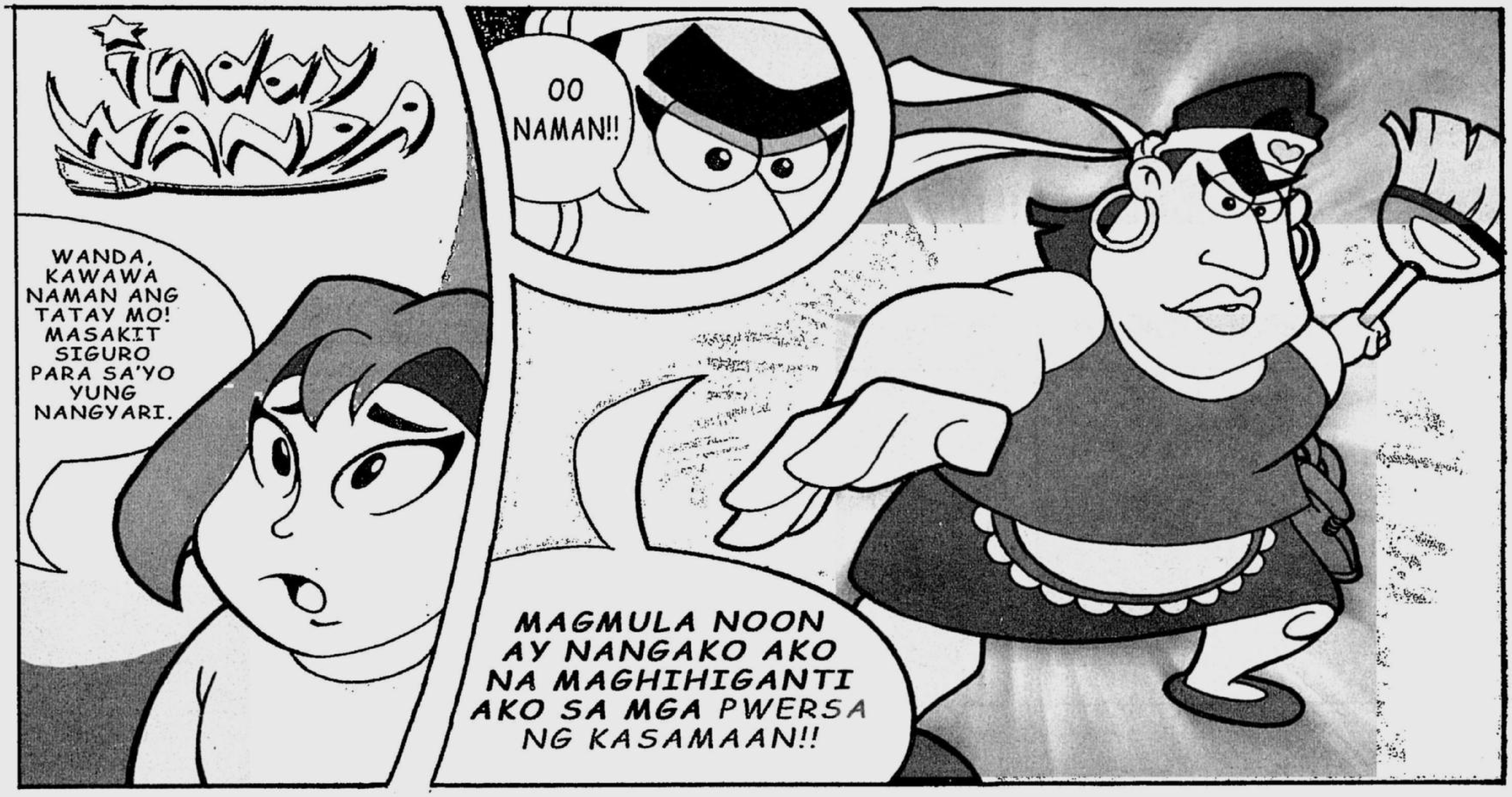
PIERCE, I HAVE A MESSAGE FOR JEREMY.
GO.
GIVE HECTOR A RIDE HOME. YOUR MOM LOCKED HER CHEESE IN A JAR.
...OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
AND SHE WONDERS WHY I SCREEN HER CALLS...
1/8

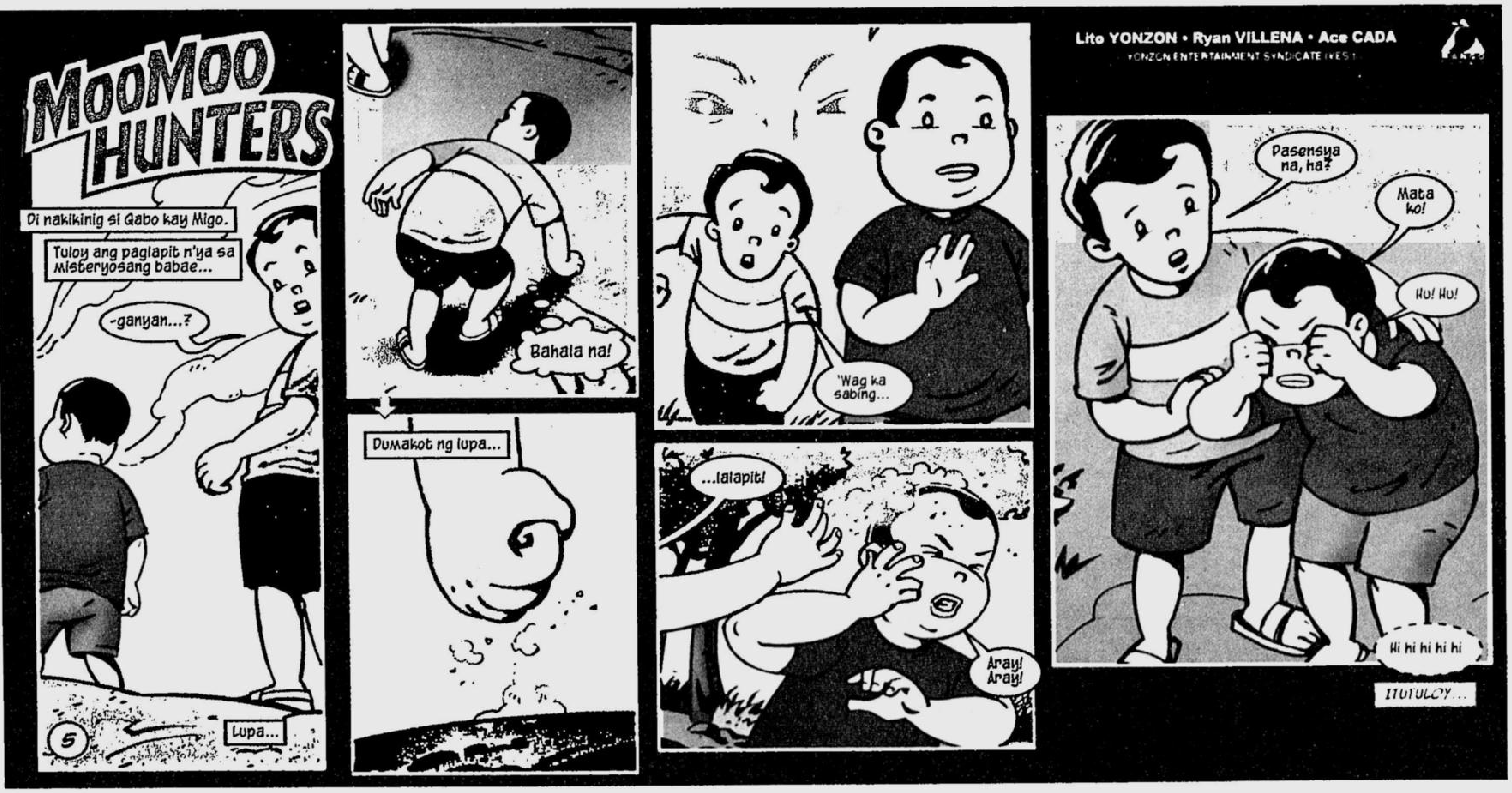
INDAY WANDA

BY BLOG CALIGUIA


Inday Wanda
WANDA, KAWAWA NAMAN ANG TATAY MO! MASAKIT SIGURO PARA SA'YO YUNG NANGYARI.
OO NAMAN!!
MAGMULA NOON AY NANGAKO AKO NA MAGHIHIGANTI AKO SA MGA PWERSA NG KASAMAAN!!

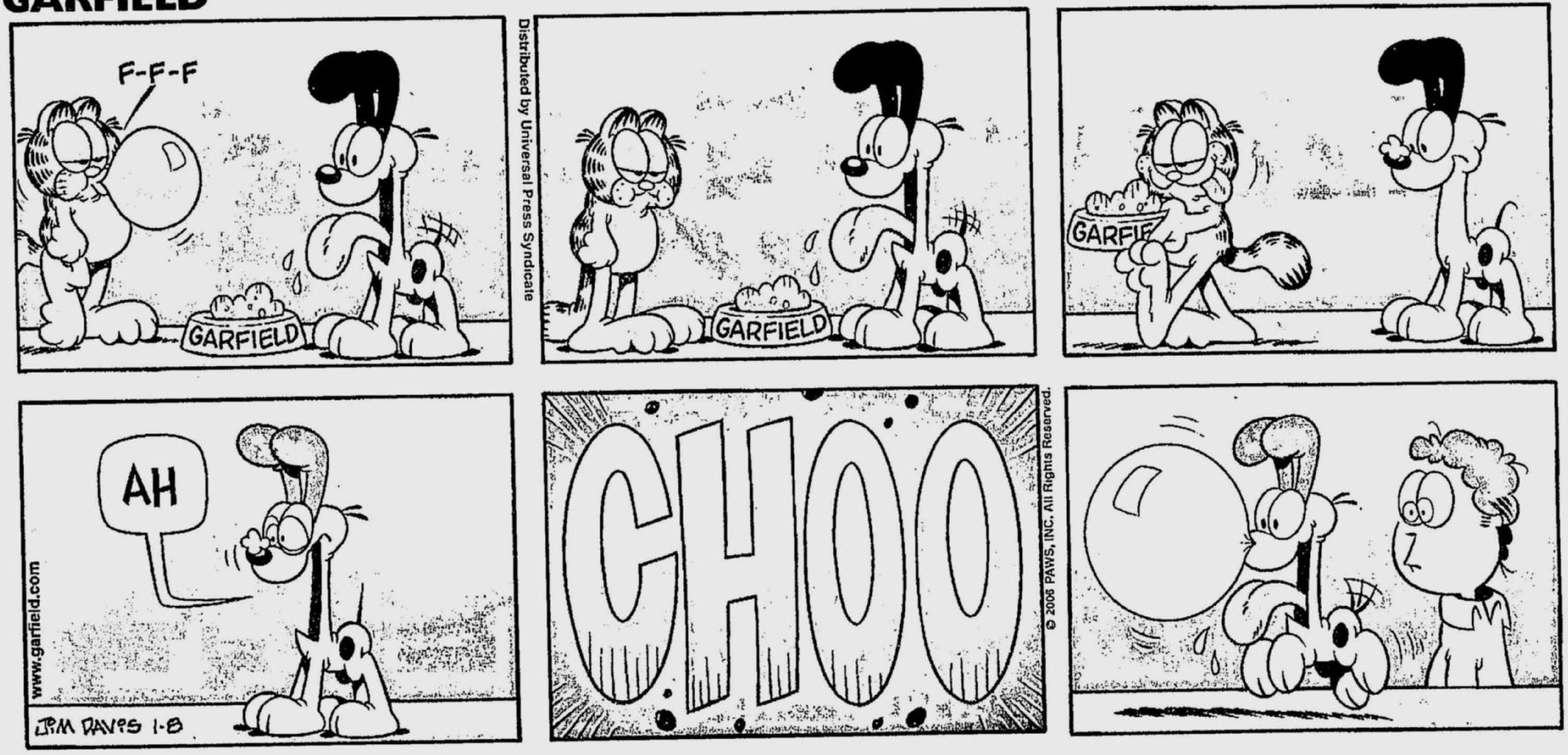
MOOMOO HUNTERS

BY MANGO COMICS


MooMoo HUNTERS
Di nakikinig si Gabo kay Migo.
Tuloy ang paglapit n'ya sa misteryosang babae...
-ganyan...?
5
Lupa...
Bahala na!
Dumakot ng lupa...
'Wag ka sabing...
...lalapit!
Aray! Aray!
Lito YONZON • Ryan VILLENA • Ace CADA
YONZON ENTERTAINMENT SYNDICATE (YES)
Pasensya na, ha?
Mata ko!
Hu! Hu!
Hi hi hi hi hi
ITUTULOY...

GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS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AH
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JIM DAVIS 1-8
CHOO
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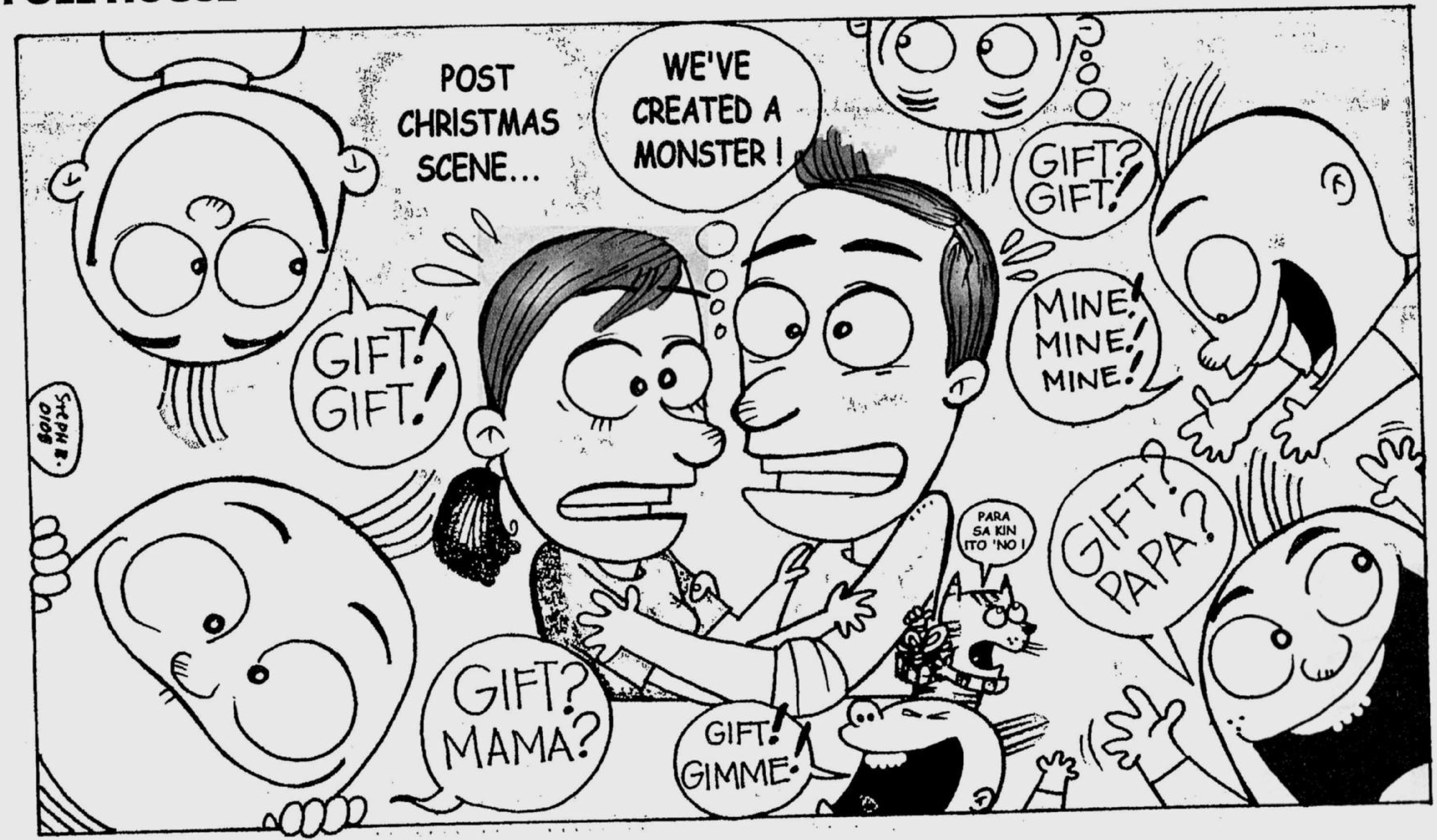
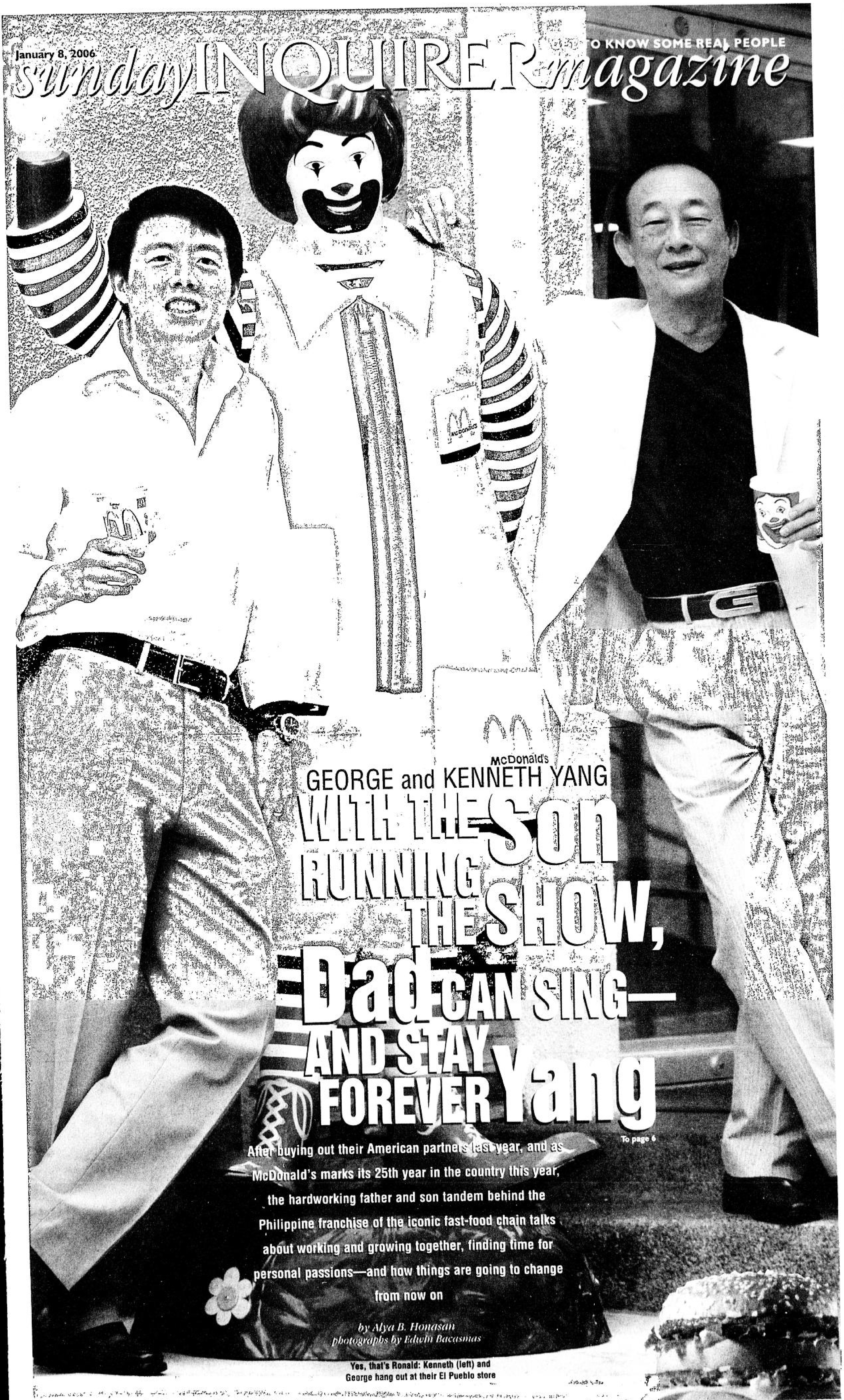
FULL HOUSE

BY STEPH BRAVO


POST CHRISTMAS SCENE...
WE'VE CREATED A MONSTER !
GIFT? GIFT!
GIFT! GIFT!
MINE! MINE! MINE!
STEPH B. 0108
PARA SA KIN ITO 'NO !
GIFT? PAPA?
GIFT? MAMA?
GIFT! GIMME!

January 8, 2006
sunday INQUIRER magazine
TO KNOW SOME REAL PEOPLE



McDonald's
GEORGE and KENNETH YANG

WITH THE Son RUNNING THE SHOW, Dad CAN SING—AND STAY FOREVER Yang

To page 6

After buying out their American partners last year, and as McDonald's marks its 25th year in the country this year, the hardworking father and son tandem behind the Philippine franchise of the iconic fast-food chain talks about working and growing together, finding time for personal passions—and how things are going to change from now on

by Alya B. Honasan
photographs by Edwin Bacasmas

Yes, that's Ronald: Kenneth (left) and George hang out at their El Pueblo store

Grieving Mothers Unite, p.3
A Rebel Romeo, p.
What's Brewing With Roy Señeres? p.8

by Molino A. Dela Peña

The Boy War Hero: Where Is He Now?

A World War II guerrilla recalls the amazing bravery of a teenage comrade in the hopes of tracing his wherabouts

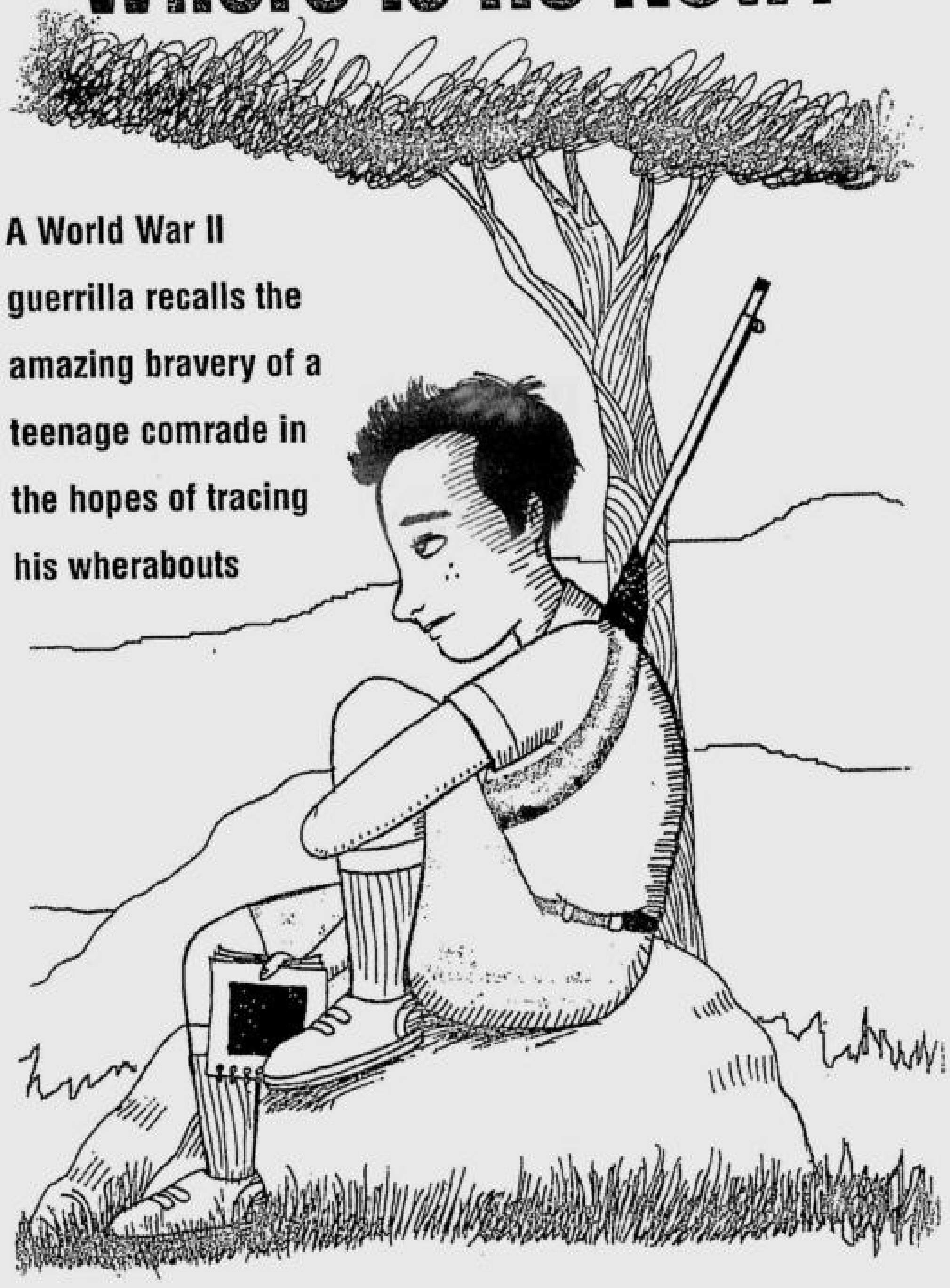


Illustration by STEPH BRAVO

GENERAL (Ret.) Ramon J. Farolan's column in the INQUIRER on Aug. 14, 2005 which said that "The bravest are usually those whom we do not know or hear about" inspired me to write about a boy who risked his life to save that of a fellow guerrilla who was shot close to the enemy line during the Second World War.

Mario was still in grade school when the Japanese army invaded and occupied the Philippines in 1941.

In 1943, Mario and I joined a guerrilla band in Nueva Ecija just for the excitement of it. Our companions were simple farmers who did not seem to mind that they received no pay, nor did they hope to be rewarded for risking their lives.

When Gen. Douglas MacArthur fulfilled his "I Shall Return" promise and the United States Army was liberating the Philippines in 1945, our guerrilla unit was attached to the 25th Infantry Division which was pursuing the Japanese Army in the mountainous jungle between the provinces of Nueva Ecija and Nueva Vizcaya.

Mario was not supposed to be in the battlefield because he was barely 14; I was already 18 at that time.

Our platoon of 32 men was assigned to protect a segment of a newly constructed dirt road in the battle zone. We dug foxholes in pairs and Mario was my foxhole buddy; we took turns watching out for the enemy at night in our foxholes.

On the morning of April 12, 1945, I was surprised that Mario was not around. I searched further and learned that the whole platoon went to the hills to rescue Freddy Ramiro, a comrade who was shot while looking for souvenirs with three others in an area thought abandoned by the enemy. His companions were able to run back to our position.

I took my automatic rifle with all the ammunition I could carry and went looking for Mario. At a nearby hill, I found Americans in their foxholes, one of whom pointed to the area down the hill.

I tried to stand and see what the place looked like but the American pushed me down and pointed at the tree near us which was riddled with enemy bullets. I went cold, thinking how easily I could get killed, should I go down the hill. But I decided to leave my fate in the hands of God and ran down the hill shouting Mario's name like a madman.

After some 100 meters down the hill, I heard Mario's voice. I found him in a deep foxhole treating Freddy, who had a nasty wound below his right rib.

As I looked at the wounded man, I remembered that Freddy was a cheerful man. In a chat a few days before, he had told me that beyond those hills was his hometown, and that he would soon see his parents. I told myself that we should get him out of there or he would never see his parents again.

Mario was placing a gauze bandage on Freddy's wound when an enemy soldier shot at us from about 50 meters away. I shot him with a burst from my automatic rifle. Our troops on the hill were also shooting at the enemy position. This cover fire prevented the enemy from leaving their cave to finish us.

After Mario finished treating Freddy, we tried to improvise a stretcher from the branches of trees scattered on the ground and from our uniforms but we could not find the right branches.

I then told Mario to get a stretcher and he dutifully ran towards the top of the hill to the right of the American position. The ground between the foxhole where we were and the ravine was almost flat, with no trees nor bushes, and anyone in that area could easily be seen by the enemy.

As Mario ran towards the direction of our troops, I kept shouting at our enemies to draw their attention. When Mario reached the foot of the ravine, he shouted to our troops for the stretcher we needed.

We waited and finally a stretcher came bouncing down, nearly hitting the boy. As Mario ran back with it, I continued shooting in the direction of the enemy position.

We carefully placed Freddy on the stretcher but before we could lift him, an enemy fired at us. Mario shot him with his carbine, almost emptying an entire clip of bullets at the poor fellow. A Japanese machine gun crew appeared at the mouth of the cave but before they could fire, a burst from my automatic rifle got the gunner, forcing the rest of the crew to withdraw. Ignoring the danger of friendly fire, Mario crept close to the cave and threw a hand grenade; the explosion silenced the enemies within.

When we were about to get going, I realized that we would be exposed to the enemy snipers once we crossed a bald section of the hill. I went to the Americans and requested the officer to fire at the enemy position over our heads to cover us. The officer replied that an accident might happen if they did that. He said they would use their mortars instead. He instructed me to wave my shirt when we were ready to move.

Down in the foxhole, I took off my shirt and waved it above my head. The mortar shells started raining on the enemy position and we moved out, carrying our patient on the stretcher. After an agonizing climb, we finally reached an area on top of the hill which was beyond the sight of the enemies.

Eleven years later, Mario Vicente and I were awarded the Gold Cross medal for "gallantry in action" under General Order Number 108 dated Sept. 11, 1958 by the General Headquarters, Armed Forces of the Philippines, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

I don't know if Mario received his medal or was honored with a formal military ceremony. I lost track of him after he left our unit immediately at the end of the war to enroll in high school in Muñoz, Nueva Ecija.

I was happy to be honored with a military ceremony when the medal was presented to me at Camp Vicente Lim, Canlubang, Laguna. By that time I was fortunate to have reached the rank of captain in the Philippine Army.

I am now 82, and perhaps some of the brave men in our company are already in their final resting place. But I hope that Mario, who deserves the medal more than this author, is still alive and hopefully reads this article. He was virtually a boy but he proved to be the most outstanding hero among the stout-hearted men of our guerrilla organization. Q

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Ceremony, after Kiarostami

Where she departs there will be no strawberries
to carry home. No women who will scar
their faces, so she won't miss this earth
of beauty and suffering, this morning
so early and green.

The fields are ripe as butter. Perched on the roofs,
light proclaims the unfamiliar world.
It's said that the good pass on, but inferno
is eternal remembering,
the inability to forget.

The road curves uphill to the sun. The country
is radiant and wide. May my passing be
as bountiful. What's tragic is not that
this journey ends, but that we once walked
through such possibilities.

I'm learning how to wait, how not to look away.
The stones are dug deep, the soul is fixed
in place. Time takes and replenishes,
sweeping towards me
with all my future joys.

Eric Gamalinda

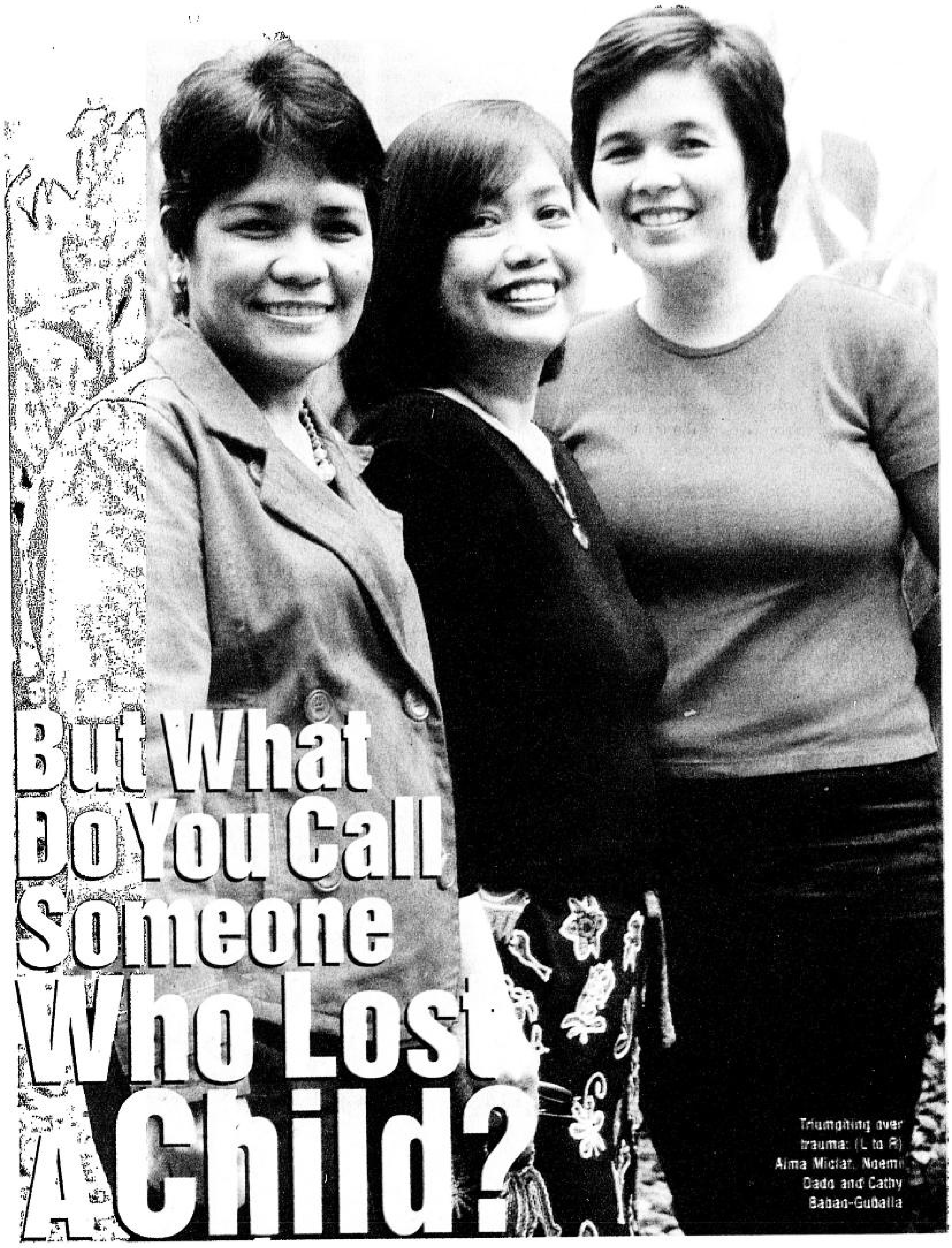
How To Be A Door

Hinge your life on something
as steadfast as a jamb
but know which way to swing.
(Those who swing both ways
belong between the dining hall
and the kitchen.) Hold your breath
when you are locked, inhale deeply
with every knock that isn't answered
with "come in." Be still when there
is no reply from the innkeeper
of all things. Your name is Portal
so with your body keep out sickness
and greed, and builders who do not know
how to hammer a house with quiet words.
Let sorrow pass, and youth, and the goldest
giraffe who bends low to nibble
from a lady's hand. That all may enter
who travelled the world to be astonished,
weary now of boulevards that look out
to the sea but never wave, finally stepping
in, reconciled with all they meet inside, all
who have come before them, all
who must dwell.

Sid Gomez Hildawa

But What Do You Call Someone Who Lost A Child?

by Joy Rojas
photographs by Romy Homillada



Triumphing over trauma: (L to R) Alma Miclat, Noemi Dado and Cathy Babao-Guballa

In the ultimate of selfless acts, three mothers, each coping with the worst of losses, go beyond their grief through The Compassionate Friends

THEY remember their sorrows like they've had them only yesterday. More than five years after her daughter, accomplished artist Maningning Miclat, fell from the seventh floor of the Far Eastern University where she was a teacher, Alma Miclat's emotions still rise when she recounts how she struggled to calmly tell her husband Mario that their 28-year-old daughter had met an accident.

Little did Alma know that her brother-in-law, who phoned her in Washington where she and Mario were attending a conference, was being gentle with her as well. Upon their arrival at the airport, the couple was met by a group that included Mario's cardiologist. Alma, who was then accompanied by her sister, sister-in-law and niece to the restroom, asked, "Which hospital is Maningning at?" "When they said we have to go to Funeraria Paz, I said, 'Oh my God!'"

For Cathy Babao-Guballa, memories of her son Migi, who passed away after surgery for congenital heart disease in 1998, include waking up to find her son, with tubes and all after a complicated 11-hour operation, "staring straight through me like there was Someone behind me." But it was their conversation prior to his surgery that struck her the most. "He asked, 'How long is the surgery going to take? How long is a short while?' Then he said, 'Will you be with me forever?'" Those would be Migi's last words to his mom. A week after doctors thought he was out of the woods, he slipped into a coma and died two weeks later at the age of 4.

Preparing for grief

A month before Jose Luis "Luijoe" Dado accidentally drowned in the kiddie pool of the Maribago Bluewater Beach Resort in Cebu where the family was vacationing in 2001, the boy, who was six, expressed an unusual interest in the afterlife. "He would ask me, 'How come Jesus died and rose from the dead? Are the clouds heaven?'" says his mom Noemi who chalked up her child's curiosity to the fact that it was Holy Week. But when the image of John the Beloved comforting Mary as she watched Jesus die on the cross caught his attention, Noemi would only see the significance of this incident at her own son's funeral. "It was his way of preparing me for my grief, of telling me there are St. Johns in my life," she says. "What I didn't realize was that St. Johns could occur even after the funeral."

Today, Dado, Guballa and Miclat are three such St. Johns, comforting others as they have been consoled through The Compassionate Friends (TCF), a grief support group they established on December 1, 2005. Founded in England in 1969 and adopted by nearly 30 countries around the world, TCF is neither a professional therapy group, nor is it affiliated with any spiritual or religious organization. Its mission simply is to offer friendship and understanding, as well as support in the grief and trauma of families following the death of a son or daughter, brother or sister.

"You don't expect to bury a child. It goes against the natural order of things," says Guballa, mother of Sofia, 14, and seven-year-old Leon, of the relevance behind TCF's focus. Avers Dado, "There's a common saying that there are names for someone who lost a parent (orphan) or a spouse (widow, widower). But what do you call someone who lost a child? It's the worst loss ever for a family because a part of your body is lost. Listen, that's all people need to do to comfort a parent or sibling who's grieving. Just listening and being a friend is enough."

Convinced that Luijoe's death prepared her for her life's journey, Dado, who runs a webhosting business, e-mailed writer and magazine editor Guballa to propose co-founding TCF. Guballa needed little convincing, having come across TCF during her own mourning period, before she decided to put up play centers for ailing children called Migi's Corner. She, in turn, would invite Miclat, an old friend whose Maningning Miclat Foundation supports young artists in the fields her daughter was famous for—painting and poetry. The trio launched their first TCF meeting last December 17 at the Greenhills Christian Fellowship in Ortigas, Pasig, with around seven couples currently in different stages of mourning their child's loss, in attendance.

Emotional sharing

Despite the awkward silence among strangers at the onset, the meeting proceeded when, much to the cofounders' surprise, the husbands initiated what turned out to be an emotional sharing. A lecture and fellowship followed before the group parted ways on a light note. "You have to get the grief out of your system," says Miclat. "That's why it's important to be around people who understand what you're going through, those who won't find you fussy or too redundant because they feel what you feel. While others might feel irritated because you keep talking about your loss, we can understand."

"Seeing us and how far we've gone in our own journeys gives them hope," says Dado, "that it's possible to have a new life."

While Guballa's new life came almost immediately after Migi's death, embarking on grief counseling and recovery workshops, as well as 11 Migi's Corners and counting, "as my promise to be with him forever," Dado floundered, neglecting her family and health for five years. "I was a zombie," says Dado, who became obese, diabetic, and was scheduled for angioplasty. "I isolated myself and didn't talk when I was with friends. It was like I wasn't even there." Eventually, her two daughters (19-year-old Lauren and Marielle, 18) and a grieving mother whose daughter also died from an accidental drowning, pulled her out of her black hole. "She saw the website I created for my son (angel-luijoe.net) and I could really feel her pain," says Dado, who went as far as to visit the lady in Cebu. "So I thought, 'If I could help one person, why not a lot more?'" The decision spurred the TCF website (http://compassionatefriends.info), its maiden meeting, and the healing of her body and relationships. Now more than 30 lbs lighter, Dado, whose daughter Marielle will lead the teens TCF group, gladly reports that her husband Butch spent last Christmas Eve at home for the very first time. "He's usually away because he gets very depressed," she explains. "But 2005 was a very good year."

Christmas dance

Ditto for Miclat who didn't let the fact that her house was an empty nest (her other child, 26-year-old daughter Banaue, is in the City University of New York's Brooklyn College finishing her MFA in acting) dampen her holidays. "For Christmas, it was just Mario and I, and we danced," she says with a smile. In between her work as a senior VP for sales and marketing at Data Center Design Corporation, Miclat is busy putting a book of essays called "Beyond The Great Wall" together with her husband and daughter. She also serves as a surrogate mother of sorts to young women on the verge of suicide. Since Maningning's death, at least four girls, all sensitive artist types like her daughter, have sought Miclat out for advice; one of them has gone on to produce award-winning poetry and lyrics. "I guess Maningning used me in some way, to be an instrument for others," she reflects.

Indeed, while these women may have made peace with their childrens' fates (in 2003, Dado laid flowers by the pool where Luijoe drowned; a year later, Guballa visited the room in the Heart Center of the Philippines where Migi passed away), all admit to having moments when the pain from their loss feels as fresh as it did on the day their lives changed forever. Guballa, who attended a family reunion before this interview, cried as Migi's face appeared in larger-than-life proportions during a video showing.

Dreams of a happy Maningning, meanwhile, somehow assure Miclat that her daughter is finally fulfilling a goal she had written in her journal: To be a better artist in the next lifetime. Still, they do not completely assuage this mother's immense sadness. "As long as we live and love," says Miclat whose eyes well up whenever she passes by FEU, "we will grieve, until we die." ◘

"YOU don't expect to bury a child": The ladies are proof that it's possible to have a new life after loss

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The Compassionate Friends will hold its second meeting on January 21, 2006 at the Greenhills Christian Fellowship, Ruby corner Garnet Roads, Ortigas Center, Pasig City, from 4 to 5:30 pm. For more information on TCF and its meetings, please call (0917) 810-1582 or (0922) 851-7553.

The Reel Life

by Eric S. Caruncho

This Filmmaking Couple's Other Baby Is Getting International Attention

AMONG other things, 2005 will probably be remembered as the year indie film broke.

Despite limited screenings and venues, independently-produced feature films such as Auraeus Solito's *"Ang Pagdadalaga ni* Maximo Oliveros" garnered both critical attention and a favorable reception from audiences grown weary of stale studio formulas and ready for something different. By indie film standards at least, where success is measured not by box office ka-ching! but by the number of theater seats occupied by living, breathing non-filmmakers, "Maximo Oliveros" was a runaway hit.

A somewhat quieter splash—due mainly to a blink-and-you'll-miss-it screening schedule—was made by "Rigodon."

Helmed by the husband and wife directorial team of Keith Sicat and Sari Lluch Dalena, "Rigodon"—which premiered at the 2005 Montreal World Film Festival—examines the intersecting lives of three Filipino immigrants in post 9/11 New York and the price they pay for pursuing the American dream.

Existential aftertaste

With its somber screen tones and serious subject matter, spiced up with a dash of surrealism, "Rigodon" is unabashedly, unapologetically arty, with none of the populist touches that made "Maximo Oliveros" such a crowd pleaser. This is offset somewhat by casting the ever-reliable Joel Torre and Chin-Chin Gutierrez, plus Fil-American actor Arthur Acuña as the three leads.

"It's not a popcorn film," admits Dalena. "It challenges the viewer to think, and to meditate. Because of the content, it's not the usual entertainment that people who watch films are looking for."

Far from being another "American Adobo," "Rigodon" is more like "American *Papaitan*" with its bitter, existential aftertaste—definitely an acquired taste and not for everyone. Not entertainment, but not exactly a root canal either (unless you're one of those people who find any form of mental exertion distressing).

"The way we attacked this one was to really explain the spiritual and internal side of it by focusing on three lonely souls," says Sicat. *"Mabigat din ang* process because when 9/11 happened, it crystallized everything, and everything became much more intense, so our focus became not just the Filipino community but the spiritual ramifications on all immigrants."

"Rigodon" also departs from the norm with a minimalist script which is short on incident and dialogue.

"We wanted to downplay the usual Filipino approach which is all dialogue and melodrama," adds Sicat. "Everything was pared down to the barest minimum, *hanggang sa makita mo na talaga ang kaluluwa* (until you can really see the soul)."

Resourceful production

In spite of its New York locations and high production values, "Rigodon" is still an example of Pinoy guerrilla filmmaking at its most resourceful. The seed money was provided by a grant from the National Council for Culture and the Arts. As a Fulbright scholar to New York University's graduate program on film production, Dalena was given access to equipment, as well as advice by NYU faculty member Spike Lee, since "Rigodon" is her thesis film. Her classmates made up the bulk of the multinational crew, and the Filipino community in New York provided additional cast and crew, as well as some sponsorships. In the end, everybody pulled together Pinoy-style to see the film through to completion.

Although they have been a couple for the past seven years, "Rigodon" also marks the first collaboration between Sicat and Dalena.

"Our temperaments are very different," says Dalena. "Our tastes in music, books don't overlap."

Neither of the two are exactly strangers to creative tensions between couples: Dalena is the eldest daughter of painter Danny Dalena and sculptor Julie Lluch, while Sicat's parents are former economic planning minister Gerardo Sicat and UP professor Loretta Makasiar, all heavyweights in their respective fields.

As the child of cinephile parents, Fellini and Buñuel were more of an influence on Dalena's formative years than Disney.

"I've always been attracted to film," she says. "My parents made me watch 'The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari' when I was seven, and Kurosawa's 'Dodeskaden' when I was about 10."

Painting and sculpture were always options, but Dalena preferred film.

"Too many visual artists in the family," she says. "Also, I liked collaborating with people."

Eventually, Dalena went on to study film at the UP College of Mass Communication, and to make experimental short films like *"Asong Simbahan,"* based on one of her father's famous paintings. *"Asong Simbahan"* and another short film, "White Crosses," eventually won the Urian Award.

With a Fulbright scholarship, Dalena enrolled in the New York University's graduate film program, where "Rigodon" became her thesis. She also made an award winning documentary on the Fil-American war titled "Memories of a Forgotten War," which was chosen as closing film at a documentary series at the Museum of Modern Art.

Creative sparks

For his part, Sicat also studied painting and photography, before enrolling in philosophy and literature at the University of Sussex in England. A classmate drafted him to help with a film project, and in no time Sicat was making his own short films in England, two of which won the CCP's Alternative Film and Video award. On home leave from school, Sicat went to the UP film center to seek out other Filipino filmmakers, and was directed to Dalena. They became a couple soon after, although not collaborators until "Rigodon."

Given their backgrounds, the potential for creative sparks starting a brushfire was always there.

"In terms of the synergy for the film, it was always there," says Sicat.

"We made sure that when we had arguments, we weren't visible to the crew because the crew drew their energy from us," says Dalena. "We had to respect each other's ideas, so we always talked about each take."

The collaboration also yielded an unexpected bonus in the form of the couple's first child, a son nicknamed Kino, whose gestation coincided with the final stages of post-production.

"In fact, the crew was taking bets on which would come first, the film or the baby," recalls Dalena. As it turned out, it was a close call, with Dalena giving birth just weeks before Montreal.

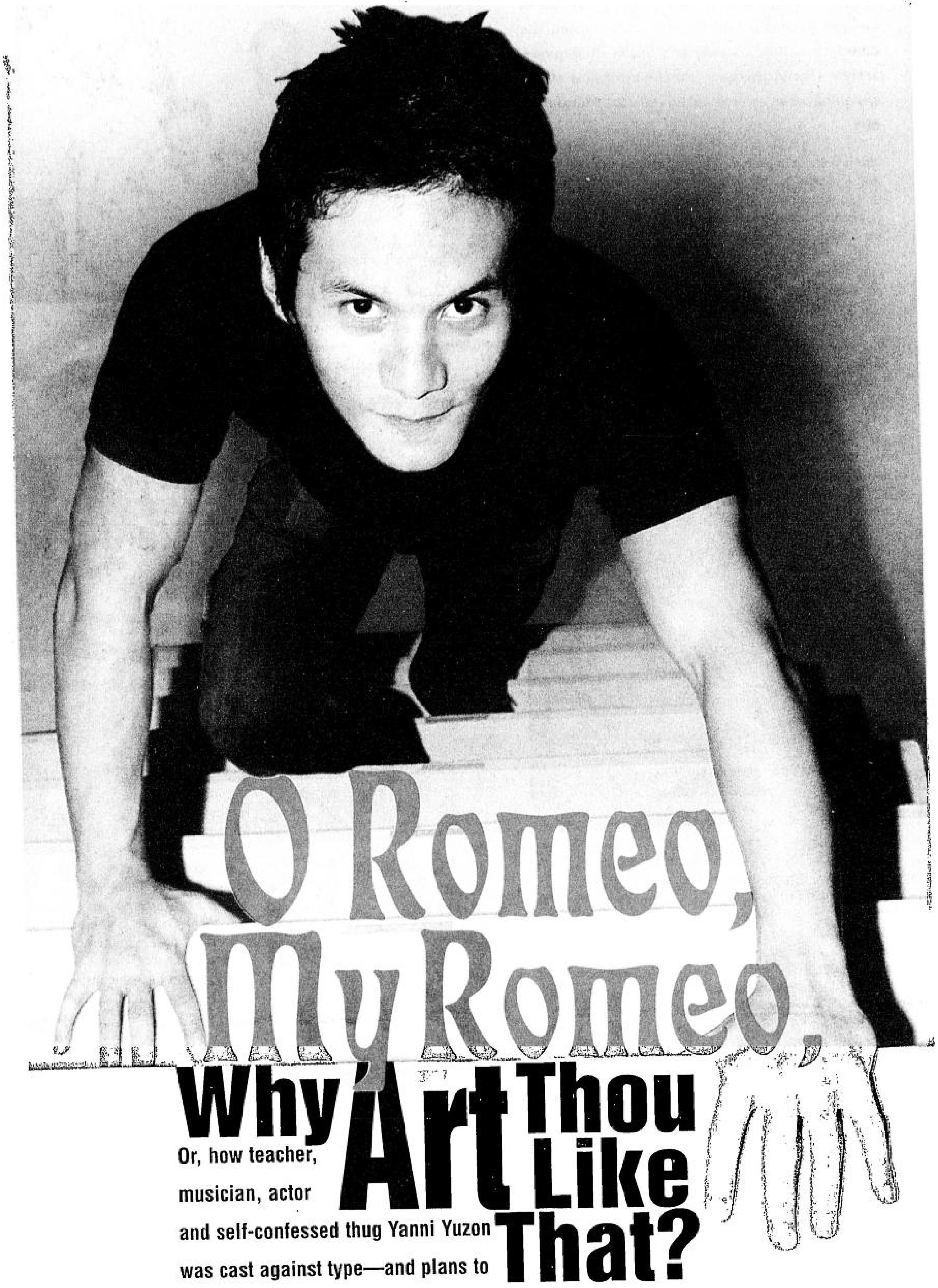
In a way, "Rigodon" is the couple's other "baby."

"We want it to have its own life, and say something about Filipinos living abroad," says Dalena. Q

RAFFY LERMA

Independent moviemakers Sari Lluch Dalena and Keith Sicat became parents at about the same time they collaborated on their first acclaimed work, which premiered at the Montreal Film Festival last year by Cora Llamas

photographs by Ryan Lim



O Romeo, My Romeo, Why Art Thou Like That?

Or, how teacher, musician, actor and self-confessed thug Yanni Yuzon was cast against type—and plans to reinvent Shakespeare's romantic hero so he's not too lovestruck and dopey

HIS Romeo in Metropolitan Theater Guild's (MTG) production of Shakespeare's famous play about star-crossed lovers may be more of a brawler than a lover. He is quick on his feet, sharp with his tongue, and would probably enjoy smashing Tybalt's face, even as he romances the lovely Juliet. Look a little closer and this particular Romeo might as well be the feisty Tybalt's twin.

Or maybe that's how Yanni Yuzon—band member, drama teacher, and an actor with a self-confessed attitude—likes to play him. Actually, he almost didn't get to play Romeo because he preferred the more fiery Tybalt. But some spark of revelation made him audition for the character that he disliked, and persuaded the MTG powers-that-be to cast him against type.

"I realized I don't like the role of Romeo because I didn't like the way it's been done," says Yuzon. And, no, thank you, hang on that balcony he might, but he won't be another sophomoric, lovestruck, giddy incarnate. "You're not gonna see a dopey-eyed Romeo who goes endlessly gushing 'I love you, I love you.' None of that crap. If I'm gonna do this Romeo like the way he's been done forever, then f-ck that sh-t, why do we have to watch it?"

The intensity with which he throws off that question makes it sound like he's itching for a debate, a fistfight, or both. "Romeo is very, very depressed; that's why he clings on to this entire romance. It's not a cute romantic love story, they kill each other at the end. It's a dark story."

Pushing the envelope

Yanni likes pushing the envelope, and there's a part of him that doesn't care if his drive for perfection ticks people off. He doesn't mince words, and sees no reason why he should tone them down. This seeming inability to be diplomatic made him quit his first job after graduating with a Bachelor's Degree in Social Sciences from the Ateneo de Manila University: a call center stint that lasted only five months.

He now laughs at the experience on hindsight. "It was a great company and the people were amazing," he acknowledges. "We were fresh graduates being fished out of our togas." But handling the complaints and requests of customers from the other side of the world on midnight shift made him realize that he wasn't exactly the helpful type. "It was not a job for me. When this customer asked, 'Why was my phone line cut off?', I had to answer, 'Because you didn't pay!' It was too stressful. I'm not a nice person. That's not a self-deprecating statement. It's being honest."

Then there was the time that he sported a T-shirt, shorts, a mohawk haircut and good-old-fashioned rubber *tsinelas* one day at work as associate editor of a men's magazine in a publishing house that espouses traditional family values. Yanni says that his bosses called his attention to his attire—not for its utter irreverence for office wardrobe, but for the words emblazoned on the shirt, which practically hurled profanity at the then President of the Philippines.

His Ateneo buddies would be the first to agree that Yanni is an a-hole with a capital A. The Ateneo high schooler who loved drama but couldn't get into the prestigious Dulaang Sibol—"I was a typical high school thug who hung around with bad kids. I didn't represent what an ambassador of Ateneo High School should be," Yanni claims—was able to enter the college drama organization Tanghalang Ateneo (TA) via the backdoor. His then-teacher and now colleague Ron Capindig saw potential in the angry young man, and cast him in the plays he was directing. When the high-school Yanni started playing supporting roles that the college kids thought they should have had first dibs at, he started getting a bad rep.

He recalls, "Ron put me in the inner circle, which the undergrads naturally hated. I was getting parts that they felt they should have gotten."

Distant memory

It also didn't help that the youngest actor in TA made his displeasure felt whenever his co-cast member was performing poorly. "I can be demanding. If they're not good in a scene, I get mad. I yell at them."

Now, though, with college plays a distant memory several years after graduation, the ex-antagonists in TA have become friends. One of them, MTG president Steven Uy, lent him a condo to sleep in during the lean years, and cast him in productions, including "Romeo."

Steven attests to his buddy's passion for theater. "The director wants a scene done this way. At some point in time, Yanni will listen but he has to go through a rehearsal first to go through that scene. He argues too much. But in the end, he will listen."

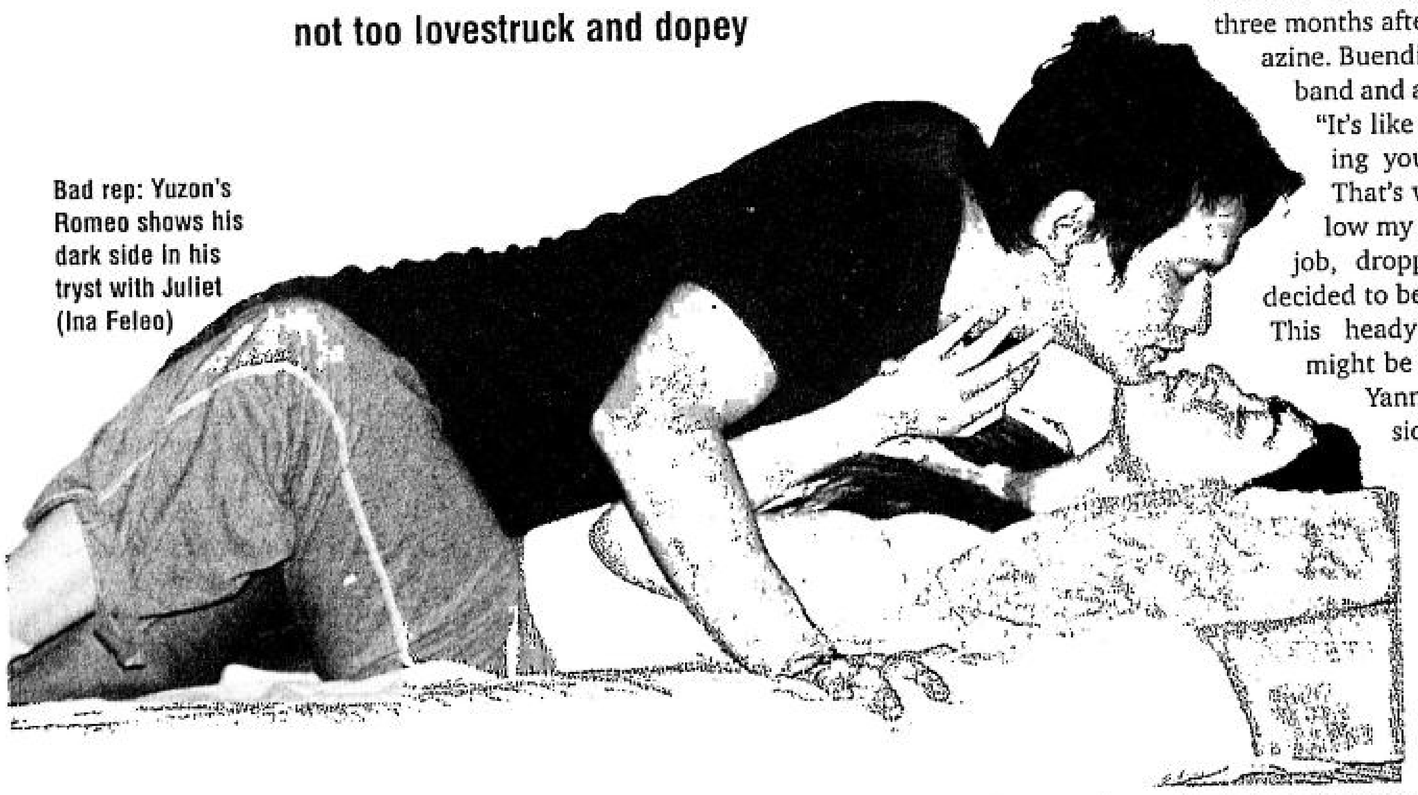
And when he doesn't, the passionate exchange of views can lead into some creative production results. "Yanni's view of the theater is more actor-based," Steven elaborates. "My vision of the theater is more of making sure that it's entertaining for the audience. When we start pushing towards what we like, that's when we clash. But at some point, it all comes together."

"You challenge each other," Yanni describes his work philosophy. "That's how you raise the bar."

What he did to his ex-professors, he now encourages among his acting and directing class students at the Ateneo. Professor and students don't stand on formality.

"I'm a teacher, you want to see my ID?" he says with a grin. "I don't allow my students to call me 'Sir.' They call me by name. We're co-directors. I tell them that this is what the book says—now throw out the book and change the world. F-ck that status quo."

Ironically, he is happy with his particular status quo at the moment. After trying out the corporate world for years, the artist has found a home in his theater, the academe, and his new rock band Pupil, fronted by ex-Eraserhead Ely Buendia, where he plays guitar.



Bad rep: Yuzon's Romeo shows his dark side in his tryst with Juliet (Ina Feleo)

Dropped everything

The call of music came a year and three months after he joined the magazine. Buendia was forming a new band and asked him to come in.

"It's like the ringmaster inviting you to join the circus. That's when I said I will follow my heart—and I quit my job, dropped everything, and decided to become a rock star."

This heady artistic brew just might be the ideal channel for Yanni to vent his aggression, which he says "isn't usually a bad thing. I'm a driven person. That's why I can't do a desk job. I'm doing theater and music, finally. Even when I teach, I'm not behind a desk. If I can make a lot of money doing that, fine. But if I can't...." he pauses for dramatic effect, then this wild mocking look enters his eyes. "...then maybe I'll sell drugs."

Overhearing the comments, Steven butts in, "Hey, don't print that, OK?"

Yanni merely chuckles, the irreverence in it underlining the joke. But once again, he just had to have the last word. He turns to his old friend, "The badder I get, the more tickets you'll sell." Q

MTG's "Romeo and Juliet" opens at the Teatro Aguinaldo on January 12. Call 0928-400-1219, Dave Fabros at (0917) 886-3642, or e-mail photoshoots@davidfabros.com

George

...from page 1

HE DISTINCTION becomes evident early on. Kenneth Yang, 40-year-old managing director of Golden Arches Development Corporation, the company behind McDonald's in the Philippines, arrives 10 minutes early for the interview at the spanking new branch in El Pueblo, Mandaluyong.

Already the place is teeming with young call center employees having breakfast, and after a discreet greeting, Kenneth quietly weaves among them. "Let me just talk to my people," he whispers. It takes a while before anybody in the crew notices that the boss is giving the month-old branch a once-over. Kenneth is soft-spoken, eagle-eyed, and dressed in trousers and an immaculate long-sleeved shirt buttoned at the cuffs. "You said casual," he says with a straight face.

A few minutes later, just a tad late, his 67-year-old father, George Yang, president and chairman of the Board, breezes in, wearing striped pants and a collarless shirt under a blazer, a la Miami Vice. "Groovy *niya, no?*" Kenneth says with a smile.

It's an affectionate, complementary pairing of two different management styles that has helped McDonald's grow into the industry maverick that it is. Yang *pere* is credited with bringing the iconic American fast-food chain to the Philippines, and helping change the concept of family dining when he opened his doors in Morayta in 1981. "I was very positive about bringing it in," George says. "In the late '70s, restaurants didn't pay as much attention to quality, cleanliness and service."

Yang is also proud of his role in contributing to what he calls "the dignity of labor." "Before, people who worked in restaurants were considered low-end. We became such a fun place to work, we had so many *colegialas* from exclusive schools applying to work with us; they would come in their Mercedes to submit their forms."

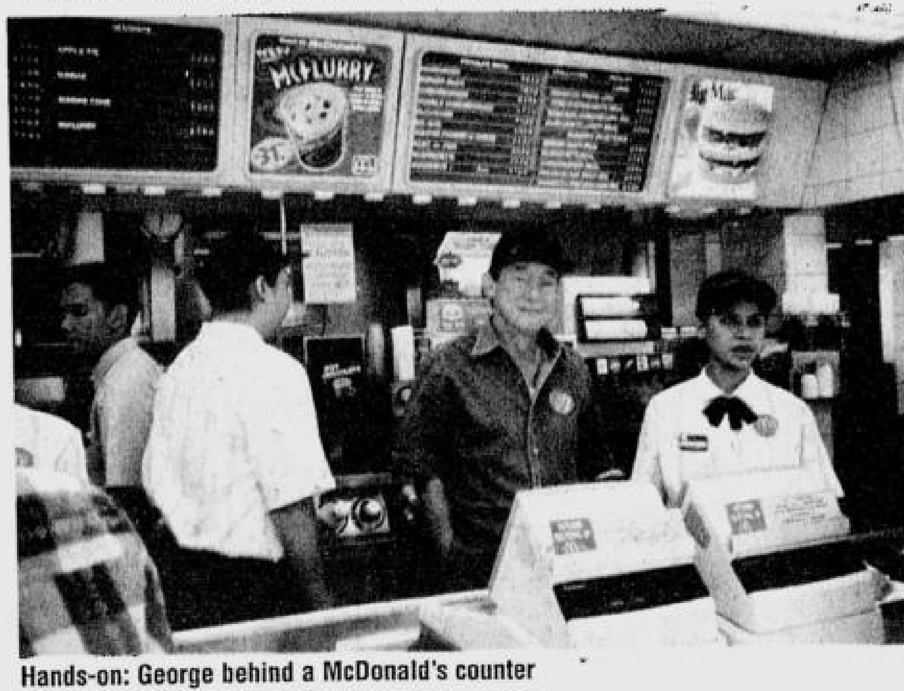
As Kenneth seconds, it was indeed "hip to be on the McDonald's crew." He knows whereof he speaks, of course; even when he was still in college, taking up Management Engineering at the Ateneo de Manila, he was already a crew member at the Cubao branch beside the old New Frontier theater. Three different nine-hour shifts make it especially convenient for working students to earn some extra money, and McDonald's prides itself in helping such kids earn enough to finish their education. "I remember I brought all my friends with me to join the crew." Did everyone know he was the boss' son? "Yes, but we were all kids, so it didn't matter. We were just having fun. They did make me clean the toilets, though. And yes, I know how to flip a hamburger, although there have been a lot of technological advancements in the kitchen since I was there."

In fact, Kenneth credits the work for helping him, then a bespectacled numbers cruncher, come out of his shell. "It was exciting, because it was a people business. I was quite shy as a person, and that's where I made a lot of friends. I was forced to smile and greet the customer." Among his funnier experiences, Kenneth recalls how customers in Cubao would come in and look for siopao. "That's hard when you have to think that the customer is always right!"

Kenneth is the eldest of the four children of George and wife Cristina, better known as the woman behind Kristine Jewelry. Brothers Richmond and Kristopher George and sister Karen Kristine help handle the family's other businesses, which include the Super Bowl of China restaurants and Fun Characters, licensee of Walt Disney Corporation in both the Philippines and Asean countries. Although it was natural for him to get into the family business, Yang *fils* admits that there were expectations of the children because of his parents' extraordinary work ethics. "Both of them were not that well-to-do when they started, and they really built things up themselves. When we were kids, they were always working; our time together was when we traveled."

George, Kenneth says, was the "typical Chinese-style dad—a power figure. My *lolo* also managed a company, but it's my dad who is really the entrepreneur."

Family values: A young family in the '80s—(left to right) Kenneth, Karen Kristine, George, Kristopher, Kristine and Richmond



Hands-on: George behind a McDonald's counter (above); growing up in Tondo (below)

George was born and raised in Tondo, Manila, the eldest among two boys and a girl. "My father was a modern Chinese who went to the Ateneo, so the most important thing to him was a good education," George says. He finished business administration cum laude at De La Salle College, and two years later, with his father's help, went on to the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce in Pennsylvania. Kenneth would also wait two years after graduating from college in 1986, doing time as a McDonald's management trainee, before his own father sent him for an MBA at the University of Chicago.

Breakneck schedule

"Even in high school, I already knew I wanted to be an entrepreneur," George recounts. "And I knew I didn't want to work for anyone else." After returning from the US, he spent only two years as an employee, as a marketing man for the Bataan Cigarette Company, while simultaneously working as a consultant to Chinese companies in Binondo and teaching night school at De La Salle. When his wife put up her own business—"I think I influenced her in that," he says almost sheepishly—George would go around to collect the earnings from Kristine stores all over the city. "When you're young, you don't get tired easily," he says, recalling the breakneck schedule. Still, he found time to bond with his kids, "especially through sports. We would play a lot of tennis, and now it's golf." Who's the better player? "Of course, him," George points to Kenneth. "It used to be me, but every generation has its time."

Kenneth's time, it seems, began in 2003, when he was appointed managing director, after doing the rounds of every department, from purchasing to business development, the part he liked best because "you get to go around and put up new branches." The farthest McDonald's store is in Zamboanga City; the day before this interview, Kenneth drove to Quezon for some inspection.

Ironically, while his dad was never his direct boss when he was rising in the company, Kenneth now reports directly to him. "My job basically means that, aside from strategic and high-level decisions, everything else falls on my lap." Interestingly, it was not his dad who promoted him, but the expat managers who used to run the company. "I guess they thought, *puede na* (he's ready)!"

Immediate mandate

Dad's immediate mandate, Kenneth says, was "raise the sales! We have to grow. His work philosophy has always been to think big. He's very instinctive, and I'm the balancing factor, more analytical." "I take risks, even if I don't win all the time," George says. "You win some, lose some. Now, though, I'm more afraid to risk, because I'm more mature. If I were younger, I'd have the luxury of time. But I've made a lot and lost a lot."

Then he brightens up visibly, as if remembering. "Well, Kenneth runs this now, and I just give my inputs. He'll be president soon. He's more detailed than me, which is good. I tend to look at the big picture all the time, and in this business, you need both." His most important piece of business advice: "You have to be focused and work hard, because everybody's good. So how do you have an edge? You work harder and you have to be persistent."

Fortunately, they both claim not to talk too much business at home. "Only at the dining table," says George. "I try not to talk about business at night, or I can't sleep!" Besides, he is soon moving out of his parents' Urdaneta place into a house just down the road, Kenneth says. For sure, George will miss waking up to see his three grandchildren Kay, Kevin and Keith, children of Kenneth and wife Cindy, who helps out her mother-in-law in the jewelry business. There are four other grandkids with Richmond, and George is looking forward to more from the newlywed Karen Kristine and the soon-to-be-wed Kris.

"His kids will have an easier time," George says, nodding towards Kenneth, "but the thing to watch out for is not to make it too easy. Hardships can be good for you. When I was small, I had to go to school, carry my own bags and take the jeepney. I was seven years old! Now we're afraid to let kids cross the street, and each one has a *yaya.*" If there's one perk that comes with scaling down, George says, it's that "I don't use an alarm clock anymore. If you do, you wake up, and you're tense *na*!"

Kenneth sighs; he's still on the clock, he says.

George's drive "to be the best," as Kenneth puts it, applies to most everything—work, tennis, golf, and now, his singing, where the elder Yang has proven to be a revelation. And we're not just talking karaoke here, although that's how he started. "You could say I discovered myself," George says with a laugh. "I always knew I could carry a tune, even when I was young, but I never pursued it. For a Chinese family singing is a waste of time."

Some seven years ago, forced to entertain guests at a bar, George discovered karaoke, and bought some equipment for his home.

Natural tenor

Soon he graduated to minus one, singing pop standards, until close friend Jose Mari Chan convinced him to cut a CD. That was "Yang At Heart," in 2002. Not much later, another friend encouraged George to try classical music because he was a natural tenor, and two other CDS followed: "Forever Yang" and the latest classical collection, "The Night is Yang," the fruit of almost a year of voice lessons with soprano Rachel Gerodias, where he takes on everything from *"O Sole Mio"* and *"Nessun Dorma"* to the theme from *"Cinema Paradiso"*—yes, he's that good.

"It's my therapy, although I really should stop smoking," George muses. He has already guested in concerts, and plans are afoot for a 25th anniversary fundraising concert with some friends for McDonalds, at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, no less.

Speaking of fundraising, McDonalds institutionalized its charity work in 1996, following the international corporate focus on children through the Ronald McDonald House Charities. Among local endeavors, the Bahay Bulilit program addresses the poor literacy of public school children, and 100 houses in the red and yellow colors of McDonalds have also been built as part of the company's early support of the Gawad Kalinga program.

After 25 years, George admits he feels both "old and young—my body is old, but my mind keeps working." With 14,000 employees and a goal of doubling the number of branches, the Yangs are raring to go with their newfound freedom, now that McDonald's here is Filipino-owned. "It was very frustrating in the past. We could not do everything we wanted because of partnerships. I had to work very hard, for example, to get approval for rice in the menu. If we had 50 percent freedom before, now we have 80 percent."

The Philippine market has its own peculiarities, the Yangs report. Filipinos eat more often, and, as Kenneth reveals, "they still need to be educated that you can have a good meal with bread."

And what about the omnipresent competition? "We just do the best we can," George says diplomatically. "There are so many things we couldn't do that the competition could. I think we gave them that opportunity. But this year is an adjustment year, a reorganizing year for us. People are going to see a change for the better."

Can we have fries with that? Q

This Week

Art

Malang marks another milestone with the opening of his latest one-man show, **Celebration**, at the SM Megamall Art Center. Coinciding with his 78th birthday, the exhibit includes many of his new works and ideas in gouache, acrylic and oil. While known for his women figures, Malang also tries his hand at abstraction. Exhibit opens Jan. 20 and will run until Feb. 2. For inquiries, call West Gallery at 634-1284.

Malang holds a "Celebration" at the SM Megamall Art Center

Introspect, a collection of fine art photography of landscapes and abstracts by Jose Mari Delgado, until Jan. 10 at the Food and Art Galerie, 12th floor GT Tower International, Ayala Avenue corner H.V. Dela Costa and Valero streets, Makati City.

Archaeology, an exhibit of resin pots inspired by archaeological finds by Renato Agustin Ong, until Jan. 15 at the UP Vargas Museum, Diliman, QC. For details, call 928-1927.

Artists-teachers and selected Art Informal students are holding an exhibit of **Large Drawings at Art Informal**, 277 Connecticut St., East Greenhills, Mandaluyong City until Jan. 15. For inquiries, call 725-8518.

Music

The Japan Foundation, Manila and Philippine Airlines present the first-ever Philippine tour of the world-renowned **Yamato: The Drummers of Japan**. The series of performances begins at the Cultural Center of the Philippines on Jan. 11. Other concerts are as follows: PETA Theater Center on Jan. 12; Riverbanks Center Amphitheater, Marikina City on Jan. 13; and Ayala Center, Cebu City on Jan. 14. The Wadaiko Yamato is one of the hottest taiko groups in Japan and is known for its percussive force and spectacle. It combines traditional Japanese musical formats with modern rhythms and themes. For details, call 811-6155 to 58.

Mag:net Café Katipunan January schedule: Jan 9—Hiraya and more; Jan. 10—Lee's Night; Jan. 11—Jazz Night: Johnny Alegre Affinity / Updharma Down; Jan. 12—Ledh and more; Jan. 13—Diana Rising and more; Jan. 14—Campusition Night: Wake up your seatmate / Hymn of Siren / Milestones / Pow Martinez and Ria Muñoz; Jan. 16-Isha; Jan. 17—Lee's Night; Jan. 18—Jazz Night: Guarana; Jan. 19—Wickermoss and more; Jan. 20—Drip / Nyko Maca; Jan. 21—Campusition Night: Diana Rising / Severo / Salamin / Pow Martinez and Ria Muñoz; Jan. 23—(To be announced); Jan. 24—Lee's Night; Jan. 25—Jazz Night: Lynn Sherman; Jan. 26—Outerhope and more; Jan. 27—Cynthia Alexander; Jan. 28—Campusition Night: Makopa / Sympatika / Pow Martinez and Ria Muñoz; Jan. 30—Julia Clarete-Crazy Mama; Jan. 31—Lee's Night. For private parties, call Raymar at 0915-9370816 / 4352631 / 9293191.

The Philippine premiere of Mark Anthony Turnage's "Three Screaming Popes," will be one of the highlights of the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra's concert slated on Jan. 13, 8 p.m. at the Cultural Center of the Philippines Main Theater. Pianist Sara Davis Buechner is guest soloist. Under the baton of Maestro Eugene Castillo, the concert, **From Big Ben to Hollywood**, includes performances of Mikos Rozsa's "Concerto for Piano and Orchestra, op. 31," and Ralph Vaughan Williams' "Symphony No. 2, A London Symphony." For inquiries and reservations, call the CCP Box Office at 832-3704, Ticketworld at National Bookstore and Tower Records (tel. 891-9999).

Onstage

Gantimpala Theater Foundation presents a twin-bill of English plays, **The God Stealer** and **The Queen's Jewel**, based on short stories written by National Artists for Literature F. Sionil Jose and Nick Joaquin. "The God Stealer" is a drama about Sam Christie, an American traveler who accompanies his friend, Philip Latak, a Manila-bred Ifugao, as they visit the latter's sick grandfather who resides in the majestic rice terraces. "The Queen's Jewel" is loosely based on Nick Joaquin's "The Legend of the Virgin's Jewel." It is a tale filled with magic and mystery as Padre Fernando discovers the presence of a gigantic serpent that keeps a mystical jewel. Performances are Jan. 14, (10 a.m./2 p.m., SM South Mall, Las Piñas City); Jan. 15-17 (outreach show in La Union); Jan. 20-22 (10 a.m./2 p.m., AFP Theater, Quezon City); Jan. 23-26 (outreach show in Urdaneta City); Jan. 28-29 (10 a.m./2 p.m., JCS Auditorium, Paco, Manila); Jan. 30-Feb. 7 (outreach show in Isabela and Tuguegarao); and Feb. 10-12 (10 a.m./2 p.m., AFP Theater, Quezon City). For tickets, sponsorship and queries for outreach tours, call 899-5745 or 896-3503.

Gantimpala Theater Foundation's "The God Stealer" goes on tour

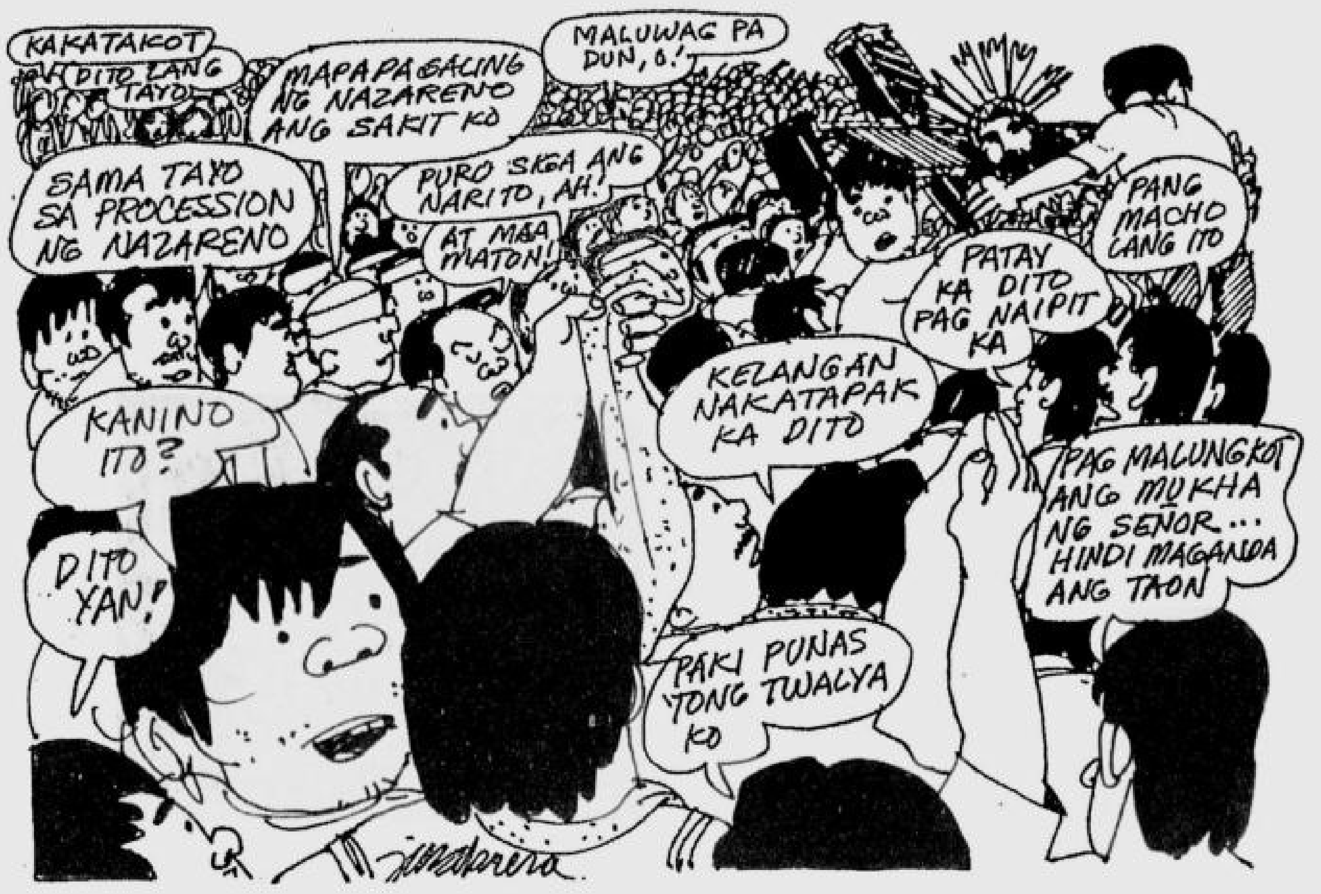
Koiné One Acts will have an extended run of **Niel de Mesa's** best-selling comedy, ***Sampung Minuto Bago Makaraos***, on Jan. 13, 14, 20, 21, 27 and 28 at 7:30 p.m. The play revolves on a chance encounter of two strangers in a public comfort room who goes through a cathartic experience while taking a dump. Running in tandem with *"Sampung Minuto Bago Makaraos"* is De Mesa's award-winning play, **I Laugh With You**, about courtship. Call 410-4485 to reserve seats. Koiné One Acts is located at 2/F Forab Building, 121 Kamuning Road, QC.

The Sunday Inquirer Magazine welcomes listings of events in and outside Metro Manila. Please send announcements at least two weeks in advance, and include contact numbers for inquiries on schedules

Pinoy Nga!

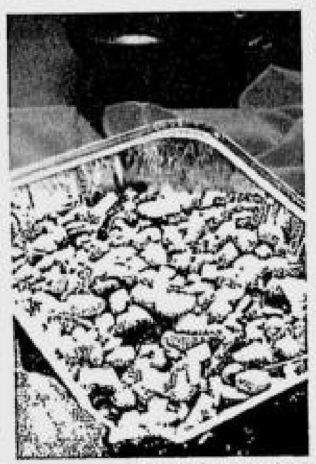
Jess Abrera

Pista ng Quiapo


KAKATAKOT
DITO LANG TAYO
MAPAPAGALING NG NAZARENO ANG SAKIT KO
MALUWAG PA DUN, O.!
SAMA TAYO SA PROCESSION NG NAZARENO
PURO SIGA ANG NARITO, AH!
AT MGA MATON!
PANG MACHO LANG ITO
PATAY KA DITO PAG NAIPIT KA
KELANGAN NAKATAPAK KA DITO
KANINO ITO?
PAG MALUNGKOT ANG MUKHA NG SEÑOR... HINDI MAGANDA ANG TAON
DITO YAN!
PAKI PUNAS YONG TWALYA KO
jmabrera

Food

Super Bowl of China lets you party with delicious and ready to serve Chinese dishes and premium gift packages with its **Chinese Christmas Cheer** promotion until Jan. 10. You can order mouth-watering Dimsum Party Platter and Super Servings of traditional Chinese fare of Lemon Chiken, Sweet and Sour Fish Fillet, Superbowl Porkchop, Deep Fried Cuttlefish with Spicy Salt, Szechuan Scallops, Szechuan Shrimp, and Beef with Broccoli among others. Select Super Bowl dishes are also available in executive food packs for as low as P200 per person. For orders, call 747-2845.



Szechuan Bowl of Shrimps from Super Bowl of China

Atbp

Old Manila Walks is offering the following walking tours this month: **The Big Binondo Food Bowl** (Jan. 14). Horse around the streets of Binondo talking Filipino history, gorging Chinese treats and even checking out the district's period architecture as you explore the flavors of Old China in Manila. Tickets at P650/adult and P350 for full-time students or museum workers with ID. **The Great Binondo Food Bowl** (Jan. 21 and 28). Savor the sights and sounds of Manila's historic Chinese quarter on this special Chinese New Year Edition of the Big Binondo Food Bowl to welcome the year of the dog. Tickets at P888/ head inclusive of a 'wok-ing lauriat' and tour. Meet at 1 p.m. at Binondo Church. Text 0917-3291622 or email oldmanilawalks@gmail.com for inquiries.

The Corporate Mind presents **Joscephine Gomez's Prescriptions for English fluency** on Jan. 15 and 22 from 2 to 6 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Galleria Manila on ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Topics include "Expressing yourself like a native English speaker," "Thirty-nine difficult usages made easy," "Getting rid of the Filipino accent" and "Advancing from your current level of fluency." For details, call 687-7898 or 0919-8763770.

Philippine Daily Inquirer

TV GUIDE

Sunday, January 8, 2006

Sayaw. Drama. Iba.
Shall We Dance? The Celebrity Dance Challenge
Sunday 9 PM
hosted by Lucy Torres Gomez
ABC Iba Tayo!

Provided by ClickTheCity.com

For more TV schedules:
1. Visit www.ClickTheCity.com or wap.clickthecity.com.
2. Key in CTC TV and send to 2333 for Globe and to 225 for Smart. PhP2.50 per SMS sent.

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC5		Rincude TV		PBA										Shall We Dance?					
ABS-CBN2	A.S.A.P Fanatics		Pinoy Big Brother Buzz		The Buzz				Goin' Bulilit		Search For A Star In A Million	Rated K		TV Patrol World	Pinoy Big Brother	Sunday Family Cinema			
AXN		3 Ninja's Kick Back				E Buzz	Samsung Sports World	Maximum Exposure (Season II)		Ultimate Guinness World Records	Ultimate Guinness World Records	Numb3rs (Season I)		CSI Crime Scene Investigation (Season 4)		CSI NY (Season I)		CSI Miami (Season 3)	
Cartoon Network	X-Men Evolution	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	Xiaolin Showdown	Tom & Jerry Show								Powerpuff Girls	Courage The Cowardly Dog	Dexter's Laboratory	Crush Gear Nitro	Power Rangers Ninja Storm	Superman The Animated Series	Harvey Birdman (11:15PM)	Mission Hill
Cinema One				My First Romance				I Think I'm In Love				Shutter				Ngayong Nandito Ka			
Cinemax		The Skulls III (3:15 PM)				A League Of Their Own				Hudson Hawk (7:15 PM)				The Boys & Girl From County Clare			National Security (10:40PM)		
CNN	International Correspondents	World News	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	World News	Design 360	World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		World News	Talk Asia	World News	MainSail	World News	World Sport	Global Challenges	Business Traveller	Talk Asia	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart
Disney Channel	Recess	Totally Spies	Lizzie Mcguire	Brandy & Mr. Whiskers	Lilo & Stitch	Totally Spies	Mr Bean	Phil Of The Future	Suite Life Of Zack And Cody	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			Mr Bean	America's Funniest Home Video	Phil Of The Future	Even Stevens	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN		Pool/Snooker Premier Snooker League '05				NFL Playoffs: AFC Wildcard						NFL Playoffs: NFC Wildcard						Pool, Snooker World Pool Masters '05 UK	
ETC	Will & Grace	Saturday Night Live		Veronica Mars		American Dreams		One Tree Hill		Queer Eye For The Straight Guy		Average Joe		Rated Oh!	The Insider Weekend	Meet My Folks		ET Weekend	
EWTN	Pilgrimages To The Shrines Of Eastern Europe	Angelus (3:15 PM)	The Donut Man	Adventures In Odyssey	Deep Conversation: Deep Prayer	Rosary With Mother Angelica	Octavia Dies	Rome Reports	EWTN Bookmark	EWTN Global Showcase		Onward Pilgrims	Mirror Of The Soul	Sunday Mass (SAP) Live			Life Is Worth Living	The Abundant Life	
Fox News		Beltway Boys	Fox News Watch	Fox Report Saturday		Heartland With John Kasich		Big Story Weekend Edition		Beltway Boys	Fox News Watch	Fox & Friends Sunday						Fox News Live	
GMA7	Gigsters	Love To Love		S-Files				Mahiwagang Baul		Starstruck 3		Mel & Joey		All Star K		Daddy Di Do Du		Sunday Night Box Office	
Hallmark Channel	The Nanny III		The Last Chance				Angel In The Family (5:20 PM)			To The Ends Of The Earth (7:10 PM)				Jane Doe Now You See It Now You Don't			Straight From The Heart (10:35PM)		
HBO				Covert Action (4:15 PM)				Back To The Future				Looney Tunes: Back In Action			Conspiracy Theory				Coming To America
IBC13		EZ Shop		EZ Shop	Mr. Taxman	Home Shopping Network		Home Shopping Network		Legacy Of Hero		TBA				Iyo Ang Kalandingan	EL SHADDAI		
JackTV		Reno 911	Blue Collar TV	X-Play	Sweat	Street Smart	The Sib Show	Hip Hop Nation	Ride With Funk Master Flex	WWE Afterburn		WWE Smackdown				South Park	The Man Show	Insomniac W/ Dave Attell	Beat The Geeks
Lifestyle Network	Date With Design	Ground Rules	Outer Spaces	Your Private Island	Breathing Room	Back To Basics	Barefoot Contessa	Everyday Italian	Ciao America With Mario									Clean House	
MTV Philippines	Mush		Laguna Beach	MTV Cribs	Wade Robson Project	Viva La Bam	Pimp My Ride	Get Hitch'd	MTV Screen	The 70's House	Spring Break	MTV Presents				Whatever Things	MTV Hits	Essential VH1	
MYX		Pinoy MYX Countdown				Take 5	MYX Bandarito	MYX News	Star MYX	MYX LOG	Pop MYX	MYX Presents		MYX Hit Chart				MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX
National Geographic		Amazing Moments		The Other Final		Science Of Football		Top 5		Wow!		About Asia/No Borders: Longest River		Nat'l Geographic Specials: Best Of The Week: Earth In Review		Treasure Fleet: The Adventures Of Zheng He			
NBN				Paco Park Presents		Kamao Sa Kampo		Tinig ng Bayan (Live)			Inter-Aksyon Sa Bayan	Battle Royale		The Sports List	Go For Gold		Business & Leisure		Unlimited Diving
Nickelodeon	Ned's Declassified School Survival Guide	Unfabulous	Naturally Sadie	Romeo	Drake & Josh	Zoey 101	Avatar: The Last Airbender	Danny Phantom	My Life As A Teenage Robot	1,2,3		Four Eyes	Zoey 101	Unfabulous	Girls In Love	Ned's Declassified School Survival Guide	Four Eyes	The Wild Thornberrys	The Brothers Garcia
PBO			Paano Ba Ang Magmahal				Silakbo				Kailangan Ko'y Ikaw				Aliwstik At Cafe				Gusto Ko Nang Lumigaya
Qtv		Baywalk		Joan Of Arcadia		Ginang Fashionista		Ang Pinaka...		Pop Star Kids		May Trabaho Ka		Sunday Super Sine				MINT (Music Interactive)	
RPN9		Golf Power	Auto Extreme	Fistorama		JAG		JAG		Navy NCIS		Without A Trace		NBA On RPN				Sure Hits	The Working President
SBN21				Buhay Pinoy		Shepherd's Voice		Sony Bmg Video				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Gabay At Aksyon			
Solar Sports			NBA Action	Solar Sports 2005 Year In Review				GWS Ep 53-2005	NBA Jam	NBA Game Spurs @ Phoenix					Sunday Slugfest: Calderon vs D. reyes				
Sports Plus				ACC Basketball Boston College @ Maryland				World Poker Tour Ep 12 Reno				Raceworld		World Game		Mercedes Championship Day 3			
Star Movies			Spartan			Soul Assassin (6:15 PM)				The Waterboy (6:55 PM)			Opening Night	Harold & Kumar Go To White Castle			There's Something About Mary		
Star World		The Apprentice/ John Lennon Working Class Hero		Tru Calling		Business Week Asia	Travel Asia	Smallville		The Simpsons	Kumars At 42	Oprah Prime Time		Koffee With Karan		The Robinsons/ The Nighty Night	Human Remains	The Simpsons	Oprah Prime Time
Studio23								Nginiig		Y Speak		Joey	Living With Fran	Will & Grace	F	Digital Tour (10:15PM)	Chefs On The Go (10:45PM)		Buffy The Vampire Slayer

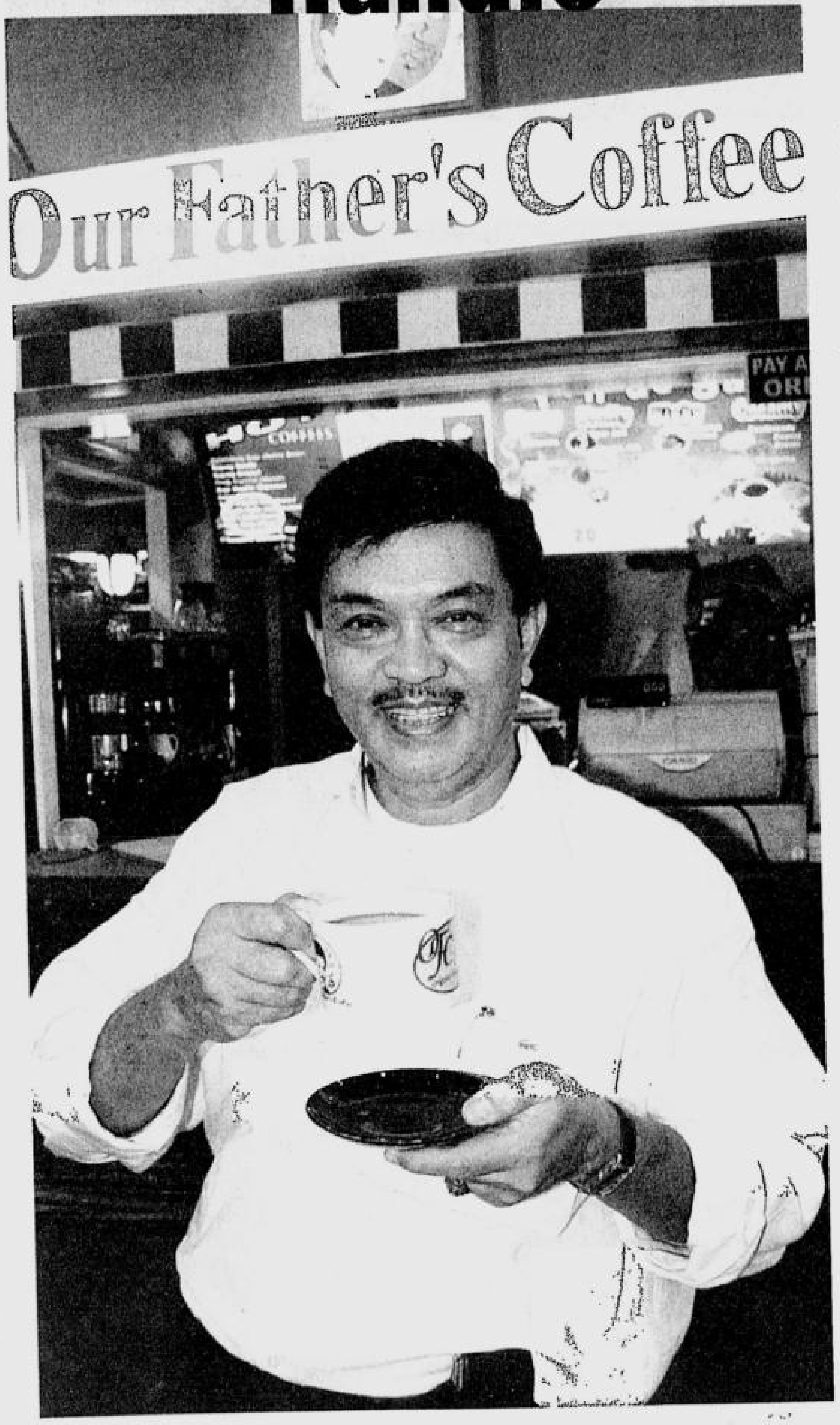
TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

Ang inyong tagapaghatid ng ulat pangmulat
alas-10 ng gabi na! Tuwing Huwebes
Ating kabalitaan
Cheri Mercado
Dito lang sa ABC
INQ TV INQ TV

by Gerry Lirio
photographs by Raffy Lerma

Roy Señeres Is Brewing Something Possibly Too Hot for GMA to Handle

This former ambassador, labor arbiter and political pundit has been accused of plotting against President Arroyo. But that's just coffee shop talk, says this lawyer who has another hot venture up his sleeves



SOME months back, President Arroyo accused him of conspiring to unseat her through a US-backed junta and relieved him of his post at the National Labor Relations Commission. Despite his denials, former ambassador, labor arbiter and lawyer Roy Señeres is indeed brewing something hot—and the Chief Executive might do well to get out of his kitchen. Señeres' offerings at Our Father's Coffee Shop just might prove too stimulating for her taste.

The coffee shop at the food court of Robinson's Galleria serves native coffee grown from Bukidnon, Batangas Barako, Cavite Amadeo and Benguet *kape*.

"I want to promote our local coffee," says Señeres of his newfound job, which had been a long-time dream. Señeres and friends provided the initial funding for the coffee shop while eldest daughter Hazel thought up the name, did the menu and developed marketing ideas, including the use of recycled paper as coffee cup. Father and daughter also screened the waiters and cashier.

The cafe serves its brew with a choice of six pieces of pizza-shaped pandesal topped with either grilled tuna from General Santos City, *longganisa* from Quezon, strawberry jam from Baguio, corned beef from Batangas, mango jelly from Cebu, or peanut butter from Laguna.

"Pinoy *na* Pinoy (very Filipino)," Señeres says of the concept.

Heady brew

Just as Pinoy is the coffee shop's ambiance, with political pundits, literati, and bohemians mixing it up in a heady brew of anything from politics to economics to showbiz. They are all there: students, contract workers, company executives, government workers, oppositionists, foreign and local diplomats, active and retired soldiers—people whom Señeres have worked with at one time of another in his long controversial career and many incarnations.

More than just a convenient hang-out, the coffee shop also doubles as an act of patriotism and nationalism for him, says Señeres.

"Our coffee is world class," he notes. "Its aroma has a unique quality that reminds me of family, home, and country. When people buy it, they help our compatriots earn a living, and the money circulates and keeps the local economy afloat."

With his working philosophy, this law graduate of San Beda College feels that he's never left government service.

Señeres has about 32 years of a proud and high profile public service career behind him. He could easily be the "*Kapeng Barako*" of the labor and diplomatic circles, often figuring in a number of controversies where he winds up vindicated.

He was among the first members of the Labor Attaché Corps when it was created by Labor Secretary Blas Ople in 1974. Along with Chito Brillantes and Reynaldo Parungao, these "Ople Boys," were the first and only labor figures that crossed over to diplomatic service in the wake of the country's burgeoning labor export.

Better assignment

Señeres remembers well Ople's instructions when he first flew to the United States as labor attaché:. "I don't care if you incur the ire of the host country as long as you please your compatriots," he quoted the labor secretary as saying. "He would tell us: 'We sent you there not to serve the foreign government, but your countrymen. In the event that you displease the foreigners, I will give you a better assignment.' "

In no time at all, Señeres became the overnight darling among contract workers in the United States and later, in the United Arab Emirates, for reportedly being approachable and results-oriented. His popularity provoked envy however and in 1986, Foreign Affairs Secretary Raul Manglapus and Labor Secretary Franklin Drilon ordered a probe of allegations levied against him by an ambassador and his wife. The probe proved nothing and Señeres was retained. When Ramos was elected president, he was appointed ambassador.

On his first day as chief of mission, Señeres was welcomed by a UAE intelligence official who revealed that he had a roomful of tapes that recorded practically all his phone conversations with other Filipinos as well as Arabs when he was still the labor attaché. His phones had been bugged, he was told, because of the ambassador's allegations against him. "We found nothing on you, that's why we have accepted your credentials with open arms," he quoted the official as saying.

But Señeres' defining moment came when UAE authorities announced that it was executing 14-year-old Filipino maid Sarah Balabagan for killing her employer after he had raped her in Abu Dhabi. President Ramos was then smarting from all the flak resulting from the execution of another maid, Flor Contemplacion, in Singapore.

Diplomatic connections

Señeres used his diplomatic connections to make it to all the monarchy's state dinners and functions, often breaking protocol to get to the king.

Balabagan was freed soon enough, prompting Ramos to order Malacañang officials to arrange a state visit to the Emirates to thank the UAE leaders. Balabagan and Señeres came home to a hero's welcome. At his intercession, says Señeres, the UAE subsequently freed two other Filipinos facing execution years later.

When Señeres finished his term as ambassador, President Joseph Estrada asked him to head the NLRC. President Arroyo later asked him to turn over the post to Labor secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas after he was accused of secretly meeting with US embassy officials in a plot to overthrow Ms Arroyo.

Three weeks ago, Señeres resurfaced as an ally of former Defense Secretary Fortunato Abat who declared himself new Philippine president and head of an alternative government. The group was arrested without warrant and charged with inciting to sedition. They were later released on bail.

Señeres says he has no regrets over the incident. "I made a point," he says. "There were people who called us crazy, but there were those who said otherwise. I am one of those dissatisfied with the Arroyo administration. I cast my lot. When the next generation realizes the government's folly, at least it can't be said that we didn't say or do anything."

In the meantime, without a podium to air his views, Señeres keeps his sentiments percolating with ea cup of coffee he serves.

Service with a smile: Hazel presents pizza-shaped *pan de sal*